Second Edition

Pathfinder®

Strength of Thousands

Adventure Path

KINDLED MAGIC

By Alexandria Bustion
and Eleanor Ferron

MAGAAMBYA CAMPUS
500 FEET
STORAGE BARN
POWDERPILE
TIRELESS HALL
HERON ARCHIVES
WARDEN HOUSE
INDIGO HALL
TREE STUMP LIBRARY
ELEPHANT MUSEUM
SHIFTING GREENHOUSE
THE BETWEEN
SPARRING FIELD
ARCHHORN LIBRARY
LESHY GARDENS
WHISTLE TOWER
VERDANT HOUSE
SPIRE DORMITORY
WELCOME WALK
DINING HALL
SUN DORMITORY
SPEAKER'S STAGE
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PATHFINDER

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Strength of Thousands
ADVENTURE PATH

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CONTENT WARNING

While *Pathfinder Adventure Path #169: Kindled Magic* contains typical Pathfinder action and adventure, it also presents, in Chapter 3, a few stark depictions of animal cruelty and abuse. Before you begin, understand that consent from everyone at the table, including the players and the Game Master, is vital to a safe and fun play experience. You should talk with your players before beginning the adventure and modify descriptions or scenarios as appropriate.

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

The devastation of Earthfall resulted in the slaughter of billions, and the widespread destruction of most civilization erased much of humanity's knowledge. The man credited with bringing magic back to humanity was Old-Mage Jatembe, a folk hero and a myth to the people of the Mwangi Expanse. During the Age of Anguish that followed Earthfall, Old-Mage Jatembe and his students, the Ten Magic Warriors, traveled the Mwangi Expanse and beyond to deliver lore, and with it, hope. Perhaps the greatest and most long-lasting of Jatembe's achievements was founding the oldest (and arguably greatest) magic school in the world, the Magaambya.

The Magaambya

To this day the Magaambya strives to spread the same knowledge and hope that Old-Mage Jatembe and the Ten Magic Warriors did long ago. Teaching a blend of arcane and primal traditions, the Magaambya aims to do more than educate wizards and druids; it hopes to act in service to the whole of Golarion.

The hierarchy of the Magaambya is as old as the school. Newcomers begin as **initiates**, and each chooses one of the school's five educational facets, called branches: visionary Cascade Bearers, sociable Emerald Boughs, curious Rain-Scribes, valorous Tempest-Sun Mages, and story-filled Uzunjati. Initiates engage in a period of public service called a Perquisite before they become **attendants**. Attendants receive a wooden mask (typically resembling an animal) that holds a fragment of the student's spirit and reflects their spirit face. Those deemed to possess enough self-direction to serve the school more broadly become **conversants**. After demonstrating sufficient mastery of Magaambyan techniques, a conversant becomes a **lore-speaker**. All teachers at the Magaambya are lore-speakers.

The player characters advance through these ranks together (though their branches may differ), beginning as initiates and becoming lore-speakers at the end of the second adventure. They take on the role of teachers for the rest of the Adventure Path.

The Vesicant Egg

Old-Mage Jatembe faced many evil forces to help bring the world back into light, and perhaps none were as insidious as the King of Biting Ants. Taking the form of a massive swarm of ants—held together only by a single, prodigious will—the King used the magic of the Doorway to the Red Star, a powerful gateway located in the Mwangi jungles, to dominate the Mwangi Expanse. Jatembe traveled to the Doorway and fought the King of Biting Ants, scattering his form and driving him through the Doorway along with his ageless acolytes. The King of Biting Ants was banished and his evil quelled for thousands of years.

Once he knew defeat was imminent, the King of Biting Ants hatched a plan. He hid tiny pieces of his psyche in the creeping, crawling insects of the ruins around the Doorway. Eventually, several of these mental fragments came together to create a magical insect egg, from which the King of Biting Ants might one day exert his evil will again.

This artifact, known as the *Vesicant Egg* is about a foot in diameter, with many strange powers the heroes will experience firsthand. Just prior to the events of the campaign, the *Vesicant Egg* ended up in the hands of Koride Ulawa, a teacher at the Magaambya, who finds the artifact a compelling puzzle but is wholly unaware of its connection to the King of Biting Ants.

Campaign Summary

The campaign's six adventures are summarized below.

KINDLED MAGIC

By Alexandria Bustion and Eleanor Ferron
Pathfinder Adventure Path #169, Levels 1–3

The heroes arrive at the Magaambya as the school's newest students, which means they must engage in public service to the school. In doing so, they learn that some strange force is drawing insects towards the campus, including monstrous ones. The heroes must overcome gremlin troublemakers and a bitter

WHAT'S COMMON?

The assumption of a common language is useful in any campaign. In the Strength of Thousands Adventure Path, references to the "Common" language (such as in creature stat blocks) refer to Mwangi, rather than Taldane. All player characters have Mwangi as their default common language. They can pick up Taldane if they'd like, but won't have a lot of use for it.

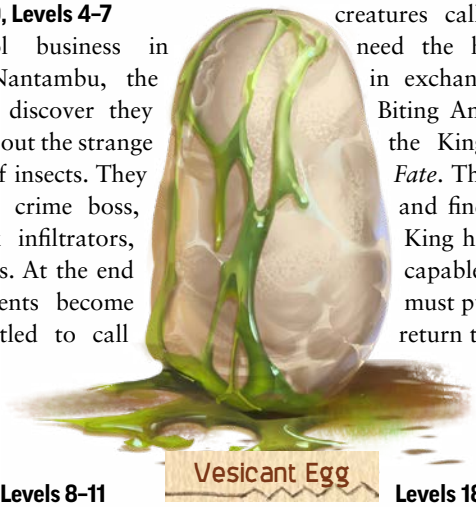
ex-student to keep the peace. While these events unfold, the heroes must engage in ordinary student life, such as deciding the specific branches of study to pursue and receiving the animal masks that show their spirit faces.

SPOKEN ON THE SONG WIND

By Quinn Murphy

Pathfinder Adventure Path #170, Levels 4–7

Trusted to handle school business in the surrounding city of Nantambu, the Song-Wind City, the heroes discover they aren't the only ones curious about the strange force attracting infestations of insects. They also contend with a grippli crime boss, uncover stealthy serpentfolk infiltrators, and keep up with their classes. At the end of this adventure, the students become full graduates and are entitled to call themselves lore-speakers.



Vesicant Egg

HURRICANE'S HOWL

By Michelle Jones

Pathfinder Adventure Path #171, Levels 8–11

As new teachers of the Magaambya, the heroes are assigned several students to instruct. When one goes missing due to family concerns back home, the heroes combine their search with a field trip. Taking their students to Terwa Lake, the heroes rescue a village under threat and uncover lost treasures in the ruined city of Bloodsalt. When the wicked Knights of Abendego destroy the village and kidnap its inhabitants, the heroes must pursue them into the Sodden Lands and put a stop to their evil.

SECRETS OF THE TEMPLE-CITY

By Luis Loza

Pathfinder Adventure Path #172, Levels 12–14

As esteemed representatives of the Magaambya, the heroes join a diplomatic expedition to the dangerous city of Mzali. There, they must negotiate with the city's evil leaders for expanded trade rights. The heroes also uncover a route to the hidden city of Osibu. Able to experience this legendary city with their students in tow, the heroes arrive and make friends with its inhabitants, including the ancient arboreal Dimari-Diji. Forces from Mzali, having also learned the route, besiege the city, and the heroes must aid in its defense. When they demonstrate their bravery, Dimari-Diji confides in them that Old-Mage Jatembe might be in some trouble on the planet Akiton, which the heroes can reach through the mystical Doorway to the Red Star.

DOORWAY TO THE RED STAR

By Michael Sayre

Pathfinder Adventure Path #173, Levels 15–17

The heroes negotiate with the guardians of the Doorway to the Red Star to gain passage to the mystical gate and learn how to travel through it to Akiton. Once there, enigmatic, bulbous-brained creatures called the Contemplatives of Ashok need the heroes' help, offering information in exchange. They reveal that the King of Biting Ants has imprisoned Jatembe aboard the King's fortress airship, *Mandibles of Fate*. The heroes must infiltrate this airship and find Jatembe, but they soon learn the King has nearly completed a superweapon capable of reshaping Golarion. The heroes must put a stop to the insectile sorcerer and return to Golarion with Jatembe.

SHADOWS OF THE ANCIENTS

By Saif Ansari

Pathfinder Adventure Path #174, Levels 18–20

Old-Mage Jatembe appoints the heroes his new Magic Warriors in a ceremony back at the Magaambya. Yet the heroes' defeat of the King of Biting Ants awakened his latent sentience within the *Vesicant Egg*, which now works to restore him. To stop the evil plan hatching within the egg, the heroes must overcome trials while shrunk to the size of ants and confront a maggot large enough to crush the school—earning the Magaambya a powerful new guardian in the process.

Key Names

The following are key proper names to keep track of in this Adventure Path.

Ahassunu Teacher; absentminded female iruxi historian.

Ajbal Kimon Evil male human leader of the wicked Knights of Abendego.

Akiton A red, dusty planet in Golarion's solar system.

Anchor Root Student; anxious female ant gnoll.

Campaign Timeline

Key events leading up to the start of the Strength of Thousands Adventure Path are listed below.

Date	Event
Age of Legend	The Contemplatives of Ashok on the distant planet of Akiton establish the Doorway to the Red Star to observe Golarion and bring their learning to the young planet. The Throat-of-Nothingness cult builds a cathedral complex around the Doorway before succumbing to self-destruction and nihilism.
–4294 AR	Skies clear from the impact of Earthfall, and the Age of Anguish begins. Desperate people struggle for survival around the world.
Approx. –3600	The first rumors of the clever and benevolent Old-Mage Jatembe—an old man, even in the oldest legends about him—begin circulating in the Mwangi Expanse.
–3505	A wicked sorcerer called the King of Biting Ants uses the Doorway's powers to dominate the surrounding region. Old-Mage Jatembe vanquishes him and banishes him to Akiton. The King leaves several component ants behind, some of which manufacture the *Vesicant Egg* to restore him to life.
–3504	Old-Mage Jatembe chooses his Ten Magic Warriors to restore the light of learning to Garund.
–3502	Jatembe founds the city of Nantambu and the Magaambya academy at its heart. Sightings of Jatembe continue for centuries as his legend grows, but he effectively disappears around this time. His Ten Magic Warriors continue to guide and serve the people of the Mwangi Expanse.
4455	Jatembe travels to Akiton, only to be imprisoned by the King of Biting Ants aboard the King's fortress-airship, *Mandibles of Fate*. While pretending to languish in prison, Jatembe secretly sabotages and delays the King's attempts to construct a superweapon to destroy Golarion.
4606	The permanent, ferocious hurricane known as the Eye of Abendego forms off of the coast of what will become the Sodden Lands. The mountaintop community of Jula becomes a coastal town.
4610	Walkena, the mummified child-god of Mzali, begins his rule of the city with a brutal, iron fist.
4680	Father Heveril, a fallen paladin of Erastil, becomes the leader of Jula.
4699	Evil Norgorber worshippers with the grandiose name of the "Knights of Abendego" arrive in Jula and begin asserting their control over the region.
4705	The King of Biting Ants learns of Jatembe's sabotage and, without Jatembe's knowledge, begins perfecting a second, secret version of his superweapon.
4719	Koride Ulawa discovers the *Vesicant Egg* and brings it to her hidden laboratory at the Magaambya. She is ignorant of its connection to the King of Biting Ants.
4721	The current year. The heroes arrive at the Magaambya to begin their academic careers.

Chizire Student; easygoing male catfolk.
Dimari-Diji Ancient male arboreal who defends Osibu.
Esi Djana Student; gifted female human.
Father Heveril Jula's leader; male human ex-paladin of Erastil.
Haibram Thodja Student; reckless male dwarf.
Ignaci Canterells Student; secretive male human.
Izem Mezitani Teacher; winged aasimar human archeologist.
Janatimo Teacher; itinerant male half-elf storyteller.
Jula A rain-lashed coastal town in the Sodden Lands.
King of Biting Ants Evil sorcerer formed from thousands of ants, banished to Akiton by Old-Mage Jatembe.
Koride Ulawa Teacher; irresponsible female human naturalist.
Lesedi Teacher; intimidating female elf extraplanar scholar.
Mafika Ayuwari Teacher; martially minded male human celebrity.
Magaambya The world's oldest magic academy, with a focus on service to all people and to the natural world.
Mariama Keitana Student; erratic female human.
Mzali A temple-city located in the southern reaches of the Mwangi Expanse.
Nantambu A canal-filled city-state located on the western edge of the Mwangi Jungle, built around the Magaambya academy on an island at its center.
Nhyira Teacher; overbearing genderfluid elf historian and patron of the arts.
Noxolo Student; investigative female human.
Okoro Obiyo Student; athletic male human.
Old-Mage Jatembe Mythical male human wizard who founded the Magaambya and helped rekindle the art of magic during the Age of Anguish.
Osibu An idyllic lost city located in the southern reaches of the Mwangi Expanse.
Seldo A small city-state on the planet Akiton.
Strands-of-Glowing-Dawn Tzeniwe Student; motherly female anadi.
Tahenkot Teacher; demanding female human scholar.
Takulu Ot Teacher; kindly male human mathematician.
Vesicant Egg An artifact containing the malevolent will of the King of Biting Ants, recovered by Koride Ulawa.
Walkena Evil mummified child-god and ruler of Mzali.
Zuma Teacher; eccentric male half-orc conspiracy theorist.

KINDLED MAGIC

Chapter 1: Orientation 8
The Magaambya's newest students must undertake an unusual interview before settling into their dormitory and meeting their peers. A week of service projects ends with a formal introduction ceremony, but gremlin saboteurs disrupt the preparations and try to make a quick end of the heroes' academic careers.

Chapter 2: First of Many 28
Settling into their class routines, the heroes perform service missions to gain favor with some of the Magaambya's teachers. Throughout these missions, the heroes learn about an unusually high amount of insect activity at the school. During their solemn First Masking ceremony, giant insects burst from the walls and attack.

Chapter 3: Stone-Cast Shadows 46
The insect attack during the First Masking reveals a sprawling warren of caves and tunnels beneath the school. The heroes receive the task of exploring the most distant and ostensibly safest tunnels, but they end up face-to-face with the vengeful ex-student behind the recent attacks.

Advancement Track

"Kindled Magic" is designed for four characters.

1. The heroes begin this adventure at 1st level.
2. The heroes reach 2nd level after they defeat the gremlins at the Introduction Ceremony.
3. The heroes reach 3rd level after completing their First Masking and fighting off the insect attack.
4. The heroes should reach 4th level by the end of the adventure.

Learning Experience

A campaign where students attend a magic school wouldn't seem very magical unless all the heroes can cast spells. Every character gains the druid multiclass archetype (*Core Rulebook* 225) or wizard multiclass archetype (*Core Rulebook* 231) to reflect the primal and arcane teaching traditions of the school. More details are provided in the free *Strength of Thousands Player's Guide*, and specific details about free archetypes can be found on page 194 of the *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*.

Throughout the Strength of Thousands Adventure Path, the heroes gain XP not from winning fights, but from solving mysteries, aiding others, or even just making friends. If character advancement in this campaign feels different than it does in other campaigns, that's perfectly fine! There are plenty of thrilling combats in store, but much of the "magic school" experience comes from helping peers, earning teachers' trust, or even getting into some trouble. Hopefully, your players learn early on—perhaps as soon as their initial interview with Teacher Ot—that their characters gain XP for these things. You should reward the heroes with full XP for creative solutions to bypassing hazards or monsters, as if the heroes had overcome the challenges in the usual manner; this might convince them to find inventive solutions to the inevitable combats.

Old-Mage Jatembe was the most powerful man in the world. Wherever he went, he spread hope and light to the people around him. All of the good things in the world were awed by Jatembe and came to give him secrets. All of the foul creatures declared war on him, but Jatembe stole their magic and banished them. In this way, Jatembe turned a world of ash into the beautiful land we have today, filled with fish and animals, grains and palm trees, sweet yams and red soil. The foul beasts wailed at their realms of ash and terror being transformed into rich and wonderful lands, but they all feared Jatembe.

One day, a creeping bad-luck spirit inched forth from the grass. It was too young and foolish to know its limits and thought, "I will take vengeance on Jatembe and laugh at his misery." The spirit crawled into the nearby village and asked where Jatembe was, but no one could answer. It asked then where the riches of Jatembe were, but people said they knew of none. It asked where the spouses of Jatembe were, but the people could not name anyone he had married. It asked where the weapons of Jatembe were, but the old mage's greatest weapon had always been the knowledge he kept in his head.

Frustrated, the little spirit demanded, "What manner of great man can this Jatembe be, if he has no riches, no wives, no husbands, no weapons, nor any children?"

Yet Jatembe had many children, the people answered, as they showed the little spirit the great city of Nantambu where thousands and thousands of students learned, worked, and helped each other by Jatembe's words. The little spirit decided that if it couldn't have vengeance on Jatembe, it would do so upon his children. The spirit listened until it found a voice that told it how to get inside. Following the voice, it crept into the city through the tiny cracks in the buildings' walls, so small that even an ant would have to squeeze, but Jatembe's students caught the spirit and tossed it out like a harmless grass snake. The spirit became terribly angry at its treatment but could do nothing on its own, and so it sought out others like itself to creep back inside and strike using the distraction of a celebration...

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

This adventure begins when the heroes arrive together at the Magaambya Academy as initiates. The Magaambya has a beautiful campus with massive mosaics of Jatembe's Ten Magic Warriors overlooking the school's terraced gardens and the surrounding city of Nantambu—a beautiful view only slightly spoiled at the moment by a powerful rainstorm. The heroes of this adventure are assumed to be young adults or older, to have secured a sponsor for their attendance at the academy, and to have just embarked on their Perquisite—a period of public service (usually lasting a year) that entitles new initiates to attend classes as well as receive school housing and stipends.

The Magaambyan instructor Takulu Ot (page 90), a human man with colorful clothing and warm eyes, meets the collected group of heroes. Once the heroes have all assembled, Takulu arrives to address them, read or paraphrase the following.

The teacher speaks with a gentle, soothing timbre. "Welcome, and a kind hello, new students. It is my pleasure to instruct you. You may call me Teacher Ot. You are embarking now on a life of study and service. We see within you intellect, passion, and judgment–in short, the virtues to build upon the strengths of the thousands who have come before you. We follow the footsteps of Old-Mage Jatembe, who showed us that the price of magic is the responsibility to better the world."

Takulu has not just come to welcome new students—he's also here to conduct the customary interview initiates receive before being accepted into the Magaambya. During their backstory, some heroes might have had individual interviews with the sponsor that recommended them to the university, which may have included picking out their branches. They're presumed to have sufficiently distinguished themselves during those interviews to initially earn their place at the Magaambya, but they must do the introductory interview with Takulu regardless.

Group Interview

No matter how the heroes came to the Magaambya, Takulu conducts a group interview with all of them. Aside from the in-world purpose of allowing Takulu to learn more about the new students, this interview is a great time for the players to introduce their characters, learn more about each other, establish pre-adventure relationships or connections based on the given answers, and get into the mindset of working with one another at a magical school before moving on to the rest of the adventure. You can shorten or expand this introductory session to suit your group's needs.

CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter, the heroes arrive at the Magaambya as new students. They engage in a curious introductory interview with the kindly Takulu Ot before getting a tour of their dormitory. During this tour, the heroes can start making friends with some of their peers. For each of the following five days, the heroes engage in service projects keyed to one of the Magaambya's five branches: Rain-Scribes, Tempest-Sun Mages, Cascade Bearers, Emerald Boughs, and Uzunjati. After these five days of service, the heroes are scheduled for the Introduction Ceremony. A gremlin attack disrupts this event and hints at larger problems at the Magaambya.

CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

This chapter doesn't provide many items, as the bulk of the heroes' treasure is in their initial stipend for becoming students. The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 1 are as follows.

- *+1 handwraps of mighty fists*
- *hand of the mage*
- *holly bush feather token*
- *wolf fang*

This interview can even serve as an introductory pre-campaign session to help you and the players build their characters together.

QUESTIONS

Takulu begins the assessment with very basic, though still important, questions for each new student. Feel free to intersperse these questions throughout the aptitude tests below; the interview should feel more like a conversation than an interrogation.

- "Who are you?"
- "What most interests you?"
- "What do you consider your greatest strength?"
- "What work have you done to bolster those in and around the Magaambya before now?"
- "What do you seek at the Magaambya?"
- "Once you have attained that which you seek, what goals do you wish to achieve?"

Takulu doesn't expect deep answers to these questions, as he knows that some heroes might not have deeply considered these matters, but he expects thoughtfulness and he wants to see how they frame their responses.

APTITUDE TESTS

Along with these simple questions, the interview involves a short series of aptitude tests for the heroes, which present challenges for the students to overcome with their skills. Takulu doesn't mind if a student declines a challenge; he understands that new students might reasonably lack the magic or skills to accomplish every task.

These tests could have many solutions depending on a specific character's abilities. Although the easiest solution to each test involves magic, Takulu also encourages the creative use of mundane abilities—he strongly believes (and gently reminds reluctant or frustrated heroes) that there's magic in everyday solutions as well. He's also pleased whenever students solve an issue by working together. Feel free to encourage players who find creative solutions to these tasks outside of the stated suggestions below, perhaps including a skill check that has a similar DC to the ones given here.

"Can you light this candle without flint or matches?" Any spell that produces flame lights the candle. A hero who succeeds at a DC 18 Survival check can also start a fire by rubbing kindling or a similar substance that isn't flint or a match. Due to the rain, there isn't a lot of suitable wood at hand; however, if the hero has dry wood or tinder, reduce the DC of this check by 5.

"Can you get a feather from this bird without plucking one?" Takulu coos to call forth a blue quail tame enough to flee only if someone gets too close. A hero with wild empathy or another such ability to communicate with the shy bird can convince it to pull or shake loose a feather with a successful DC 13 Diplomacy check. Luring the bird near something sticky (like honey) or rough (like bark) to snag a feather requires a successful a DC 13 Nature or Survival check. A hero who scares the bird with a spell like *fear* or who succeeds at a DC 16 Intimidation check frightens the bird into flapping its wings and dislodging a feather.

"Can you get a secret from this snake?" Takulu presents a small, harmless Garundi shovel-snout snake with distinctive scale patterns. A hero who succeeds at a DC 17 Occultism check while looking over the patterns realizes that the snake was born alongside a shadow twin who watches events from the spirit world. Additionally, a hero who handles the snake identifies a hidden spike on the snake's tail with a successful DC 15 Perception or Nature check. Finally, a hero who looks over the snake and succeeds at a DC 14 Medicine check realizes that the snake is blind in one eye. Takulu counts any of these facts as a secret.

"Can you soothe the soul of this bone?" This test is somewhat a trick question, as Takulu knows that the heroes are unlikely to have higher-level spells like *gentle repose* or *rest eternal*. However, a hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Religion, Performance, or Society check (or a check with an appropriate Lore skill) knows a socially appropriate funeral rite to perform on the bone. Takulu considers anyone attempting to cast the *soothe* spell on the bone a bit too clever for their own good, but he counts that approach as a success as well.

"Can you make this stone dance by itself?" This test is another trick question. The heroes might inquire what counts as "by itself," but Takulu simply tells them to use their own judgment. He knows that most students lack the *animate object* ritual to perform the most direct solution to the problem, but he accepts spells that move the rock, such as *gust of wind* or *unseen servant*. A hero who succeed at a DC 17 Acrobatics, Athletics, or Thievery check can skip or spin the rock with sufficient force that it continues moving by itself long enough for Takulu to count the attempt as a success.

XP Award: Grant the heroes 30 XP for each aptitude test they pass, to a maximum of 150 XP.

MAGIC SYMBOLS

Takulu magically conjures glowing symbols in the air and says, "You see six symbols before you. Which do you choose?" These symbols might seem related to the questions and the aptitude tests, but they serve

a different function: they help kindle the characters' innate magical talent into a spell. He waits until all the heroes have chosen a symbol (or opted to not choose any symbol at all, which he respects as a choice). Multiple heroes can choose the same symbol.

A hero who selects a symbol gains a cantrip as an innate spell, which they can cast at will. If the hero already knows the cantrip, choose another arcane or primal cantrip the hero doesn't already know that seems appropriate for their symbol choice. The hero keeps this cantrip until they learn to cast another cantrip from any other source (which is likely to be when they acquire the druid or wizard multiclass archetype upon reaching 2nd level). At that point, the greater magical lore they've unlocked replaces this minor spark of magic. A hero who doesn't choose a symbol doesn't get a cantrip but gains a +1 status bonus to saving throws against spells until they reach 2nd level.

Flickering Candle: The hero gains *dancing lights* as a primal innate spell.

Balanced Scales: The hero gains *guidance* as a primal innate spell.

Multipronged Key: The hero gains *mage hand* as an arcane innate spell.

Pursed Lips: The hero gains *message* as an arcane innate spell.

Open Hand with an Eye in the Palm: The hero gains *shield* as an arcane innate spell.

Running Hourglass: The hero gains *stabilize* as a primal innate spell.

FINAL QUESTION

Takulu has one final question for the heroes, but he doesn't require an answer right away. Read or paraphrase the following.

"At the Magaambya, we seek to understand our differences. Where others might dismiss a trait as irrelevant or troublesome, we understand that the things that make us unique in life are key to who we are as people. And it is who we are as people that defines our magic. Sometimes, it is things that are different about us, things that societies have taught us to hate, that show what our talent will be. To the north, people say that children with white or red hair have strong potential for magic. Here in Nantambu, we recognize that left-handed people are skilled at undoing spells. One student of mine is terrified of butterflies, even though he considers it ridiculous. Yet in exchange for this fear of fluttering whimsy, he has one of the most orderly minds for games and strategy that I have ever seen.

"Sometimes, we do not understand our magic, and that lack of understanding causes pain. People who are uncomfortable in their own skin are incredible shapechangers but often feel unsettled until they recognize the shape they were meant to be. Those who feel an urge to jump from high places often become frightened of themselves, but they are simply channeling the untrained will to fly.

"Sometimes, our talents are not revealed by happy means," Teacher Ot face becomes somber, and he continues, "One student here had a family who planned her life out from birth to death, punishing her when she deviated the slightest bit. She only found freedom in the thought of her grave, and as a result, the dead began to speak to her. Here, she has freedom to choose her own path, but her necromancy remains strong.

"You don't have to share, but I want you to ask yourselves: what about you defines you, even if others rarely notice it? Is there something inside you that pulls at you, perhaps defying rational explanation? Thus, I return to my first question: who are you, and how can that person best be guided to grow?"

Once each student has either answered this final question or promised to think on it, Takulu hands each of them a yellow and blue bead made of durable glass. He tells them that they're expected to wear a string of beads at all times to identify them as initiates of the Magaambya (both to let people know they represent the school as well as to identify them as initiates should they cause trouble). He asks each hero to incorporate this bead in their string, as it shows his role as the teacher who has admitted them. If they don't yet have a string of beads—or even know about this requirement—he explains it to them and then asks them to start their string with the bead he's given them.

The group interview complete, Takulu directs the heroes to Spire Dormitory, where they'll stay while they're students at the Magaambya.

XP Award: After the completion of the initial interview, grant the heroes 80 XP.

INSECTILE HEROES

Some characters might be insectile or arachnid in form or outlook (such as anadi characters) and are thus drawn by the *Vesicant Egg* as well. These characters don't have any particular insight into what has drawn them here any more than mundane insects do, and they aren't drawn to any specific place on campus just yet. They only know that the Magaambya feels very much like the right place and that they belong on campus—a feeling that many students over the years have shared!

Spire Dormitory

With their interviews completed, the heroes can now freely explore the campus at their leisure, though the pouring rain discourages them from wandering far. The map of the Magaambya grounds appears on the inside front cover of this adventure. The obvious place for the heroes to shelter and unpack is their assigned student dorm building, the Spire Dormitory. This building already houses several fellow initiates who have been informed of the heroes' impending arrival. When the heroes reach the dorm, Esi Djana (page 68) approaches to help the new initiates get settled in. Esi is an ambitious young woman who has already made a name for herself at the Magaambya. She carries a number of spider-silk umbrellas in case any of the heroes don't have protection from the rain and need it. Read or paraphrase the following.

A young woman trots out from the one-story dormitory building, Shielding her head with a silk umbrella reinforced with dry reeds. Four stone spires surround and rise above the building. "You're the new students, o? You'll be rooming with us in Spire Dorm. Come in, I'll show you the place." The woman gestures with her umbrella toward the door, taking a few steps back toward the building's welcoming, dry overhang.

A catfolk sprawls beneath the eaves of the dormitory building, a sliced and sticky mango laying on a cloth on his chest. He looks up from licking the juice off his fingers, his mouth spreading into a toothy smile. "Care for some mango?" he says cheerfully while gesturing idly to the fruit. "Or if you'd prefer something to cheer you up from the rain, I have some wine brewing back in my room."

"Don't offer them your moonshine!" Esi scolds, before addressing the heroes again. "This is Chizire. Don't become a slacker like him."

"I don't need to study. Amurruns have the best magic, everyone says so," Chizire says. "Esi here is trying to run the entire school. Even playing teacher for the new students, it looks like."

Esi blows out a sharp breath. "Koride told me to get them settled. Said that handling the new students was our job."

"Fft. Do we look like attendants to her? Not yet, we aren't," Chizire replies, turning his attention back to peeling the skin off another slice of mango. Esi waits for a moment before scuffing her foot at the catfolk's tail and then stepping over him to go inside.

As Esi shows the heroes around Spire Dormitory, she also notes that in addition to sharing living space, the heroes have been chosen to become a "cohort." Cohorts at the Magaambya are initiate groups that shares the same class schedule and Perquisite work schedule. These groups rotate duties with other cohorts to ensure each cohort gets a specific day of the week off from their work.

In addition to Chizire and Esi, Ignaci Canterells and Anchor Root currently occupy the dorm. The other students living here are currently elsewhere.

Ignaci greets the heroes with a charming manner that seems as polished and rehearsed as his smile. As soon as it's polite to do so in conversation, he mentions that he sells alchemical items for a "reasonable fee to recoup his time and expenses." He also mentions that the dorm holds a weekly game night that the heroes are welcome to attend.

Anchor Root is currently trying to clear out a mundane infestation of ants (which, unbeknownst to the students, have been attracted by the *Vesicant Egg*). She's leading her fluffy chicken familiar around by a stick, and the chicken eagerly gobbles up the ants. The gnoll squeaks in horror when spotted and tries to avoid notice by hiding—poorly—behind a piece of furniture. Friendly heroes can wrest a few soft-voiced responses from her and possibly even convince her to show off her collection of pet fruit beetles.

FEATURES OF SPIRE DORMITORY

Spire Dormitory is an open, airy building with several comfortable couches and beautiful mosaics. Four tall spires surround the building, two to the north and two to the south. At 50 feet high, these spires stand much taller than the single-story dormitory. Open construction allows ample light during daylight hours, and lanterns hang in each room to provide light at night. Ceilings are 10 feet tall throughout, and the sturdy wooden doors latch from the inside (some students have, at their expense, installed locks). Each dorm room has mosaic floors and a university-provided bed, couch, and chest. Some chambers originally served different purposes and were only later converted into residences, so some rooms are larger than others; this discrepancy is a point of minor contention between the students in residence.

A1. SOARING SPIRE

This spire looks identical to the other three around the dormitory: a narrow pillar of stone that tapers to a blunt point 50 feet above the ground. However, a strange gravitational anomaly surrounds this spire. A creature within 15 feet of the spire can High Jump up to 60 feet into the air without an Athletics check and land without falling damage. Magaambyan students mostly use this zone to slingshot each other into the air for fun or to access the sloped roof of the dormitory for some privacy. Unsurprisingly, Haibram uses it as a launching point for hang gliding and tries to fly as far as he can.

A2. COMMON ROOM

Decorated with a colorful and intricate mosaic on the walls and floors, this large room has a number of plush couches for students to relax, socialize with one another, or simply take a quick nap.

MEET YOUR PEERS

The heroes are hardly the only up-and-coming students at the Magaambya. *Kindled Magic* outlines nine NPC students who are interwoven throughout this Adventure Path as peers and colleagues of the heroes, beginning on page 67. As they're meant to grow alongside and remain relatively on par with the heroes during the Adventure Path, they don't have any listed statistics beyond the skills they know best. Though these characters are meant to take an auxiliary role to the heroes' actions, they're valuable for creating a sense of immersion and community. At your discretion, feel free to add more students or even replace these students with different NPCs.

Befriending Students: The heroes will probably want to make friends with at least some of these NPCs. As noted on page 246 of the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*, the use of the Diplomacy skill to change an NPC's attitude only lasts for the current social interaction unless the GM decides otherwise. It's up to you to decide when an NPC student's attitude permanently shifts in favor of the heroes. Befriending these NPCs earns the heroes classroom benefits and access to uncommon rules items, as described on page 67.

Handling NPCs: Running the many teachers and students of the Magaambya can prove a difficult task for even the most prepared GM. Depending on the experience and willingness of you and your roleplaying group, you can consider allowing your players to roleplay specific student NPCs in addition to their own characters–this approach might be more challenging for the players but has the benefit of making the NPCs more robust. You can even reward Hero Points for occasions when a player-run NPC acts in character, but in a way that inconveniences the heroes.

A3. WEST BATH

Magic keeps the water in this large bath fresh and warm. The antechamber to the south serves as a washing and changing room but has informally turned into a laundry. There are just about always piles of laundry stacked here.

Anyone searching this area who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check finds a loose stone concealing three dishes of a strange red mold. Chizire keeps this mold here, and he's the only one aware of its presence. The mold is harmless, but it causes a creature who ingests a dish of it to display fever symptoms, including bloodshot eyes and yellowed skin, for 24 hours. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature check to Recall Knowledge identifies the effects of the mold; on a critical failure, the hero thinks the mold is poisonous. Chizire uses the mold to fake illness whenever he has an obligation he doesn't feel like doing.

A4. WASHROOMS

The dorm has two major washrooms that each contain toilets, mirrors, and washbasins for the students to freshen up.

A5. ANCHOR ROOT'S ROOM

Anchor Root's room is mostly neat, save for the occasional dried chicken dropping. Stacks of small, cleaned animal bones sit in the corners, and several large tubs serve as homes to her collection of pet fruit beetles, many of which are the size of a human fist.

A6. ESI'S ROOM

This room is crammed to the brim with hiking and sports sticks, cut pieces of leather, carving supplies, book glue, parchment, stray books, and half-done sewing projects. Despite this quality, Esi occasionally comments on the strangeness of having such a large room to herself and how it often feels empty.

A7. OKORO'S ROOM

Games of all kinds, from wooden board games to dart boards and hoops, have been piled high in this room. Everything appears impeccably organized with not even a speck of dust or mud on anything.

A8. CHIZIRE'S ROOM

This room most notably features a fully functional moonshine still. Chizire happily shares his recent brewing projects with anyone who happens to pass by, regardless of whether they're interested. Despite this contraption taking up most of his room's free space, Chizire also keeps a few shade-loving plants from Kibwe in pots.

A9. MARIAMA'S ROOM

This room formerly belonged to Haibram, but the dwarf wagered it in a high-stakes card game against Mariama and lost. Mariama's room is filled with wooden practice weapons, old scrolls, impressive but magically inert knickknacks, and a stuffed lizard toy. The room also smells heavily of narcotics. Her familiar, a fat monitor lizard named Kedu, is usually asleep near the window.

A10. TZENIWE'S ROOM

Due to her two children, Tzeniwe received the largest dorm room, which the other residents have grudgingly admitted is fair and thus off-limits from various student gambits. As one might expect from the presence of two rambunctious spiderlings, the room looks messy with toys, webs, and weaving projects stuck to various walls and the ceiling.

A11. IGNACI'S ROOM

Glass alchemy equipment primarily occupies the room, scattered across the extra chest, desk, and bookshelf that Ignaci misappropriated from elsewhere on campus. Ignaci sells common alchemical elixirs of 3rd level or less and alchemical tools of 4th level or less; he has a one in four chance of having something specific the heroes ask about right on hand. If he makes bombs or poisons, he certainly doesn't admit to it.

A12. HAIBRAM'S ROOM

After losing his large room to Mariama in a card game, Haibram remained true to his word and moved into this smaller chamber—clearly, he's more sore about losing than about the smaller accommodations. Haibram has an impressive collection of weapons, both real and fake, but his most impressive possession is a pair of cloth and reed dragon wings big enough for flight.

A13. NOXOLO'S ROOM

This room contains a large collection of dance outfits, several small chests of medical supplies, and a tall jug of water Noxolo keeps on hand as an emergency fire extinguisher. Almost all of the room's furniture and her possessions have been crammed against the walls of the room, leaving a large amount of clear floor space at the center for dancing.

A14. AVAILABLE ROOMS

There are six rooms available from which the heroes can choose. Each is neatly made and ready for someone to move into it. Upon each bed, the heroes find a scrap of yellow cloth folded around a

sunburst-shaped glass bead to add to the string of beads they wear as initiates.

A15. EAST BATH — LOW 1

Kept slightly cooler than the west bath, this large bath sees less use from the residents, as does the laundry room to the south. The east bath has a few heaps of clothes that have been here for months but which no one has claimed.

Creatures: The ambient magic of the Magaambya, and of this area in particular, has animated two scraps of cloth as spellskeins. The spellskeins don't bother the dorm's residents, instead hiding in wicker baskets, under the wash bin, or in cracks in the wall. As a result, the residents don't even know of their presence. The spellskeins are nevertheless protective of the students, and when a hero comes into this area for the first time, the spellskeins mistake them for an intruder and hop out in frog shape to attack. They enthusiastically attack but break off combat quickly. Any spellskein reduced to fewer than 6 Hit Points, or which becomes grabbed, ceases its attacks. The heroes can drive these spellskeins out of the dorm, but once the tiny constructs accept the heroes as proper residents, they're harmless, other than stealing the occasional unattended kerchief or sash.

SPELLSKEINS (2) — CREATURE 0

Page 85

Initiative Stealth +7

Treasure: The heroes can find a *+1 handwraps of mighty blows* among the abandoned laundry here. None of the other students have claimed it, so the heroes can keep it if they'd like.

A16. ALL-SEEING SOLUTIONS

This well-rendered drawing of the black-and-white mask of Nethys, god of magic, adorns the wall at the end of the hall. The words "All-Seeing Solutions: Pay in Light, Let the Darkness Show Wisdom!" is inked onto the wall next to the mask. Ignaci built a magical machine behind the mask, just visible behind the mask's eyes. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Arcana or Perception check while examining the mask spots it there. When someone places a silver piece into the slot of the white eye and holds a written assignment or question before the black eye, the mask's mouth ejects a scrap of paper. This paper most often contains an insulting message (like "your penmanship leaves something to be desired.") or gibberish (like "needs more green curry!"), but Ignaci put a bit more magic into this prank project than expected: one out of 10 times, the scrap of paper provides a genuinely helpful clue to completing the assignment. A mask only spits out a response to a particular assignment or question once. Perplexed students desperate to finish an assignment sometimes rely on the All-Seeing Solutions when they have no other choice. Ignaci removes the money and changes the paper every week or so.

A17. MAINTENANCE HATCH

The secret door to this hallway is well-hidden, but marks on the floor and the wall nearby give away its frequent use. A hero looking around this area finds the secret door with a successful DC 16 Perception check. A hatch at the end of the hall leads into a cramped maze of decommissioned water and delivery tunnels beneath the campus. The other students know about these tunnels and mostly use them for exploring, playing card games, or engaging in other private endeavors. Anyone in the tunnels can sometimes hear echoes of conversations from distant parts of the campus. If the heroes don't discover this secret tunnel on their own, a student they've befriended might tell them about it. Where the tunnels might lead is up to you, but the heroes will learn that they lead to some storage rooms later in this chapter and, near the end of this adventure, that they connect to some dangerous insect-invested caverns.

A18. FROG POND

Though various puddles and pools spring up all over campus during Nantambu's rainy season, this deep pond remains all year round. While Mariama is convinced that the frogs in the pond are enchanted and deliberately jump on her, the frogs are entirely ordinary but attracted to the bright colors and unusual scents Mariama wears.

Around Campus

After the heroes have settled in at the Spire Dormitory, Esi offers to show them around the other two areas they're most likely to frequent while living on campus: the dining hall and the student supply store. The latter is particularly important, as the heroes must go there to get their stipends for supplies and other living expenses. If the heroes balk at going back out into the rain, Esi replies with a laugh, "You had better get used to it, o! It rains like this over half the year."

Lumusi Yao

THE DINING HALL

The Magaambya's dining hall is a large, kitchen-warmed facility with handsome mosaics and plenty of seating. Though most students take their meals outside on sunny days, the hall is a very popular meeting place for students and teachers during the rainy season. Scholars soak up the warmth, chat with each other, and casually eat slices of mango or plantains from wide, shallow baskets.

The head cook, **Lumusi Yao** (NG female human chef 5), makes a point of coming out to greet new students and welcoming them to the dining hall, which she considers her domain. She notes that the students receive two meals every day and that the dining hall is open from sunrise until two hours after sunset each day. Although most workers in the dining hall know students by sight, Lumusi gives each of them a glass bead resembling a piece of fruit to mark their status. She encourages them to wear it along with their other beads.

If the conversation gets around to money-making opportunities, Lumusi mentions that she uses students to help the constantly overworked kitchen staff. Students can use the Earn Income downtime action (*Core Rulebook* 236) to harvest nearby jungle fruit (using Survival), help tend the community gardens (using Nature), repair serving dishes or kitchen implements (Crafting), or use other relevant skills. Lumusi typically has students conduct level 1 tasks, but at your discretion, she might have more challenging opportunities available.

STUDENT SUPPLY STORE

Affectionately named "the Powderpile" due to its large collection of magical powders, the student supply store is run by a diligent kobold named **Xhokan** (LN male kobold inventory manager 9). Xhokan gives each new student who comes to the store a small lump of clay and demands they roll it into a bead and then return it to him for his collection. In exchange, the kobold gives each of them a tan glass bead in the shape of a bulging sack for them to wear with their other beads.

More importantly, Xhokan gives each hero their initial stipend of 40 gp and some basic supplies, such as parchment, quills, and ink. He explains that, so long as they're students in good standing, they receive basic school supplies and 4 gp at the start of every month. He gives them their first 4 gp as well but bristles at any suggestion that he should've simply given a lump sum of 44 gp—to Xhokan's keen mind, the amounts are separate and should be given and tracked separately. This initial stipend seems like a lot of money, but it's the bulk of the party's treasure for this chapter.

Xhokan's store sells many common items the heroes might need: all adventuring gear; alchemical items, held items, and worn items up to 3rd level; oils, potions, scrolls, and wands up to 5th level; and staves up to 6th level. He can recommend merchants in Nantambu for other common items the heroes might want. Xhokan also notes that the store pays a finder's fee for items of interest to the Magaambya, allowing the heroes to sell treasure they find to the school. His store opens two hours before lunch and closes at sunset.

At your discretion, Xhokan can sell more dangerous or advanced supplies as the students continue their studies, which is most likely to occur when the heroes gain higher ranks in the Magaambya. Xhokan might give access to these items earlier if the students prove that they can manage such items safely.

Service Projects

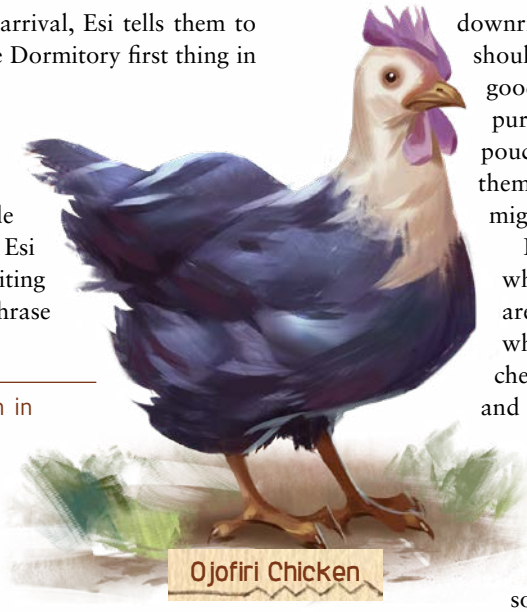
As part of the conditions of their acceptance into the Magaambya, the heroes are expected to perform their Perquisite, a period of public service to the school and to the people living around it. To help the heroes settle into these responsibilities, the academy asked the senior initiates in the heroes' dorm to spend five days giving the heroes tasks for their Perquisite, then introduce the heroes to the Magaambya's teachers on the sixth day so that the new initiates can start attending classes after a day of rest. Esi Djana suggested that the tasks for the Perquisites be used to help teach the heroes skills and magic important to

each of the Magaambya's five branches: Rain-Scribes, Tempest-Sun Mages, Cascade Bearers, Emerald Boughs, and Uzunjati. The other initiates agreed, though with varying degrees of enthusiasm.

The day after the heroes' arrival, Esi tells them to meet her in front of the Spire Dormitory first thing in the morning.

Rain-Scribe Assignment

When the heroes arrive outside the dormitory the next day, Esi and Haibram Thodja are waiting to greet them. Read or paraphrase the following.



Ojofiri Chicken

"Ah, the green shoots blossom in the rain," a well-muscled and clean-shaven dwarven man calls out with a smile. He gives a friendly wave. "It was meant to be me and Root meeting you, but I guess not?"

"I swapped with Anchor Root," Esi replies, brushing the point aside before addressing the new students. "Over the next five days, you'll be helping with each of the school's five branches. Haibram and Anchor Root seek to join the Rain-Scribes. It's the branch that explores the world and helps other travelers make their way through uncertain territories. That means Rain-Scribes have to work well with both nature and people."

Haibram continues, "We can really use your help. The Kafesi Market won't deal with anyone they know is part of the Magaambya. Since you're new, you should be able to get in without a problem. You'll be looking for, er, chickens.

"Did you know there's such a thing as endangered chickens? Of course, any chicken that comes too close to me is endangered," Haibram grins. "A farmer outside of Nantambu, Bisola, said her family used to keep Ojofiri chickens. Said they could hatch anything, even a dragon egg! I don't know about that, but she wants to raise Ojofiris again, so we're going to get her some. Ojofiri eggs aren't very hardy and the birds aren't good layers, so they mostly got put in soup and now there's hardly any left. Well, we caught wind that someone at Kafesi has a few chicks. Go and bring some back."

The pair describes Ojofiri chickens as small fowl with white faces, dark blue feathers, and lavender combs; chicks should have dark blue feathers with a white underbelly. They ask the heroes to bring back at least four chicks, which hopefully will ensure there's at least one male and one female chicken, but the more the better. They also describe the Kafesi Market as a wandering bazaar that clashed with the Magaambya in the past; its merchants are shrewd bargainers at best, and some are downright unscrupulous. The heroes should investigate sellers and their goods carefully before making a purchase. Esi gives the heroes a pouch with 20 gp and encourages them to hurry—the Ojofiri chicks might sell out.

Esi brushes off questions about why the Magaambya agents aren't welcome there, but a hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Society check, or who later asks around and succeeds at a DC 17 Diplomacy check to Gather Information, learns that the Magaambya actually won't deal with the Kafesi Market. Some of the market's merchants have sold dangerous magical items and lethal curses—as a result, the Magaambya has informally boycotted them. With the heroes so new in their affiliation, they can visit the market without implicating the school as a whole.

SEARCHING KAFESI MARKET

The heroes might not realize it right away, but they're on a timer. The only chicken breeder with Ojofiri chicks, **Makena** (N female human chicken breeder), has only eight of them, and she sells one every hour. The heroes must learn the market's current location, find the merchant, then barter for the chickens while she still has some left. The suggested skills for these tasks are listed below; as usual, other appropriate skills and Lore skills can be used instead of the given list, and you should allow players who come up with creative solutions to use different skills (but with a similar DC).

Finding the Vendors: Kafesi Market is a travelling market comprised of simple wooden tables that serve as stalls, sheltered under a cluster of large, colorful umbrellas. Heroes trying to find the market's current location in Nantambu must succeed at a DC 19 Diplomacy check to Gather Information (DC 15 if the heroes hide their initiate beads since people are reluctant to direct Magaambyans to the market) or a DC 19 Perception check to simply look around. If the heroes want to Aid one another on this check, the DC to Aid is 15. Finding the market takes 2 hours, or 1 hour on a critical success.

On a success, the heroes find the location of the market and are directed to Makena. On a failure, the heroes find the location of the market but are referred to a different livestock merchant named **Seydou** (CN male human livestock merchant). On a critical failure, the heroes don't learn the location of the market at all and must try again, taking more time.

The market is currently on the far west end of Nantambu. Reaching the market requires a soggy and cold half-hour walk.

Bartering with Makena: Makena is a stern-faced woman with her head shaved bald and huge hoop earrings through her ears. She's willing to sell Ojofiri chicks to the heroes, but she's a hard bargainer. Her current asking price is 4 gp per chick. The heroes can spend time negotiating to try to lower the price, though Makena sells a chick to another customer during each negotiation check, reducing the total number of chicks available by one. Bargaining requires a hero to attempt a DC 15 Deception, Diplomacy, or Intimidation check, or a DC 13 Mercantile Lore check. On a success, Makena lowers her price to 3 gp per chick; on a critical success, she lowers the price to 2 gp per chick. She provides no price reduction on a failure, but on a critical failure, she increases the price to 5 gp per chick out of stubbornness.

Bartering with Seydou: Seydou is a human man with a short, gray tunic and white-blue paint all over his body. He doesn't have any Ojofiri chicks but does have two chicks with grey-black feathers and white underbellies that could pass as Ojofiri chickens to an uneducated eye. If asked about Ojofiri chickens, Seydou happily tries to sell the heroes both fakes for 2 gp each. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature or Perception check recognizes the trick. If they confront Seydou about this deception, the merchant laughs it off, claims it was a simple misunderstanding, and encourages them to look for another buyer if they're going to be so picky. The heroes likely have to look elsewhere anyway since they need more chicks than what Seydou offers. Asking around uses the same process as described in Finding the Vendors, but the time is halved and the DCs are reduced by 2 since the heroes have already reached the market.

If the heroes purchase the fake chicks, Esi and Haibram accept them. Anchor Root knows at a glance that they're not the right chicks, and she lets Esi and Haibram know in an indirect, non-confrontational manner. Esi isn't nearly so circumspect, and she informs the heroes in no uncertain terms that they should really be more wary of trickery in the future.

Shopping at Kafesi: Though the heroes have come here for chickens, nothing prevents them from shopping for other items. The market has common items of 5th level or less, including items Xhokan doesn't carry at the Powderpile (such as weapons and armor). Doing other shopping generally takes 30 minutes.

Chicken Care: Any hero Trained in Nature or who succeeds at a DC 14 Medicine or Nature checks recognizes that baby chicks should be kept warm on the long, wet walk back to the Magaambya. Ojofiri chicks are especially fragile, and without special care during the damp and cold trek back to the academy, they'll get sick enough to die. A hero must attempt a DC 15 Medicine or Nature check to keep the chicks warm and healthy. On a success, the chickens all make it back to the school just fine. On a failure, one chick gets sick and dies. On a critical failure, or if the heroes don't ever realize that the chicks should be kept warm, two chicks get sick and die.

While Esi would prefer the heroes return any leftover money from the outing, neither she nor Haibram know how much the chicks cost, so the heroes can keep the change without consequences if they so choose.

XP Award: For each healthy Ojofiri chick the heroes bring back, award them 30 XP (up to 120 XP).

Tempest-Sun Mage Assignment

Esi asks the heroes to return to the same meeting spot the next day after breakfast for their next Perquisite task. When the heroes arrive, Esi awaits them. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Morning, o!" Esi bobs her umbrella in greeting. "It's only me today, I'm the only one of us who plans to join the Tempest-Sun Mages. That's the branch that defends Nantambu and the people around the city from outside threats, big and small. Today, you're going to help us with a very small threat. Some gremlins have gotten into one of the school's storage rooms. I want you to get them out without harming them.

"I mean it," Esi adds with emphasis. "They're sour little pests, but they haven't done anything except throw some jars around and be obnoxious. The Magaambya doesn't approve of killing anyone just because of who they are. A student was even expelled because of it, back before I came here.

"Between you and me, I don't think anyone will mind much if you gave one or two a whack to the head, but get them out of the storage room and release them off the grounds—really, it's probably best to release them outside of Nantambu entirely."

The expelled student that Esi mentions is Uduak Basni, a young man who suffered a terrible fate after violently protesting his punishment and wound up as Stone Ghost (page 88). Though the latter fact remains unknown to the members of the Magaambya, heroes who investigate the matter of gremlin attacks at the academy learn about Uduak's story up until the time of his (presumed) death. Esi only knows the broadest strokes of the incident but can suggest that curious heroes ask a teacher or look into the school records after they've finished their assignments.

Esi isn't entirely clear on the distinction between gremlin types, but she has been told that these gremlins are called pugwampis. Heroes who succeed at a DC 14 Nature check (or a DC 12 Gremlin Lore or similar Lore check) to Recall Knowledge remember that pugwampi gremlins are fey creatures that cause misfortune to nearby creatures; a hero also recalls that pugwampis have an obsessive love of gnolls. On a critical success, the hero remembers that gremlins have an aversion to small bells made of semiprecious metal. Xhokan sells small silver bells at the student supply store for 5 sp, but he loans them at no charge if told that the heroes need them for an assignment. If the heroes think to research the topic of pugwampis in a school library, the Recall Knowledge check takes 1 hour but gains a +2 circumstance bonus. Looking in the library also reveals the tragic story of Uduak Basni.

The heroes might ask for Anchor Root's help if they find out that pugwampis revere gnolls. While Anchor Root doesn't feel comfortable refusing a reasonable request, she's also scared to face gremlins. Enlisting her aid requires a PC to succeed at a DC 16 Diplomacy check. On a success, she comes along but doesn't aid in any fight, and she retreats to her room immediately after the harrowing encounter. On a failure, or if the heroes attempt to Intimidate her or otherwise compel her with force, Anchor Root has a full-fledged anxiety attack and becomes wholly unable to assist.

GREMLIN BELLS

Some old tales indicate that gremlins fear and shun hanging bells of semiprecious metals, such as silver or gold. Although most bells lack any genuine gremlin-repelling power, most gremlins believe this superstition and avoid strings of valuable-looking bells. The heroes don't know it yet, but they'll soon have an opportunity to enchant bells to repel gremlins and other nefarious fey—and, later, they'll put their magical defenses to use!

STORAGE BARN — SEVERE 1

The gremlin-infested storage room is one of six rooms in a large storage barn on campus. The main door to the barn is open, but a broom handle stuck sideways through infested storage room's door keeps it jammed shut. From the outside, the heroes can easily open the door, but the gremlins couldn't get it open from the inside (and they haven't bothered to try). The storage room is semi-circular in shape with a 10-foot-high ceiling. The room has two sets of shelves, one 3 feet off the ground and one 7 feet off the ground. Though the room has no windows, a trio of sunrods have spilled out of a gnawed barrel, illuminating the chamber with bright light. Several broken jars litter the floor.

A secret hatch in the floor is normally difficult to spot, but the angle of light from the sunrods makes it easier than usual to notice. A hero searching the room who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check sees the outline of the hatch. It leads to the maze of tunnels beneath the school, which is how the gremlins got into the barn. A hatch in the exterior wall of the nearby Star Dormitory provides the closest access to the surface, but the tunnels connect to the Spire Dormitory, too.

Creatures: Four pugwampis hide on the top shelves of the storage room. They were ordered to cause trouble by their boss, Kurshkin, and throw jars at anyone who enters the room (or just for the fun of it).

As Esi noted, the gremlins don't aim to permanently injure anyone and mainly seek to break things while simultaneously upsetting people. The pugwampis throw anything within reach at the heroes, then hide behind the clutter of the top shelves to avoid any repercussions. However, if attacked with lethal damage, the gremlins fight to kill in self-defense.

Any pugwampi reduced to fewer than 6 Hit Points tries to escape through the hatch in the floor and flees the campus grounds as quickly as possible.

Nonlethal Attacks: The heroes can simply beat the pugwampis into unconsciousness with nonlethal attacks and remove them from the campus.

Scare Them Out: These pugwampis have an almost pathological fear of metal bells. They avoid attacking anyone holding metal bells; if all the heroes do so, the gremlins don't attack at all. Any hero holding metal bells gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Intimidation checks against them. A pugwampi that is Demoralized from someone holding bells can't reduce its frightened condition as long as it can see the person holding the bells, and it's fleeing for as long as it's frightened (and likely just keeps running, even if it recovers).

Anchor Root's Help: Another solution involves asking Anchor Root to convince the pugwampis to leave. The pugwampis only speak Gnoll and Undercommon, and since Anchor Root speaks Gnoll, she can communicate with them. When she starts talking, it becomes clear that the pugwampis give her a lot of deference; unless they're in combat, they sit at her feet and listen attentively to what she says. Getting Anchor Root to lead the pugwampis away is as easy as letting her know which way to go. Once she has led them where the heroes want, she commands them to disperse and cause no more trouble. They scatter immediately, but being gremlins, they're unlikely to refrain from mischief for long.

Should the heroes interrogate a pugwampi (after arranging a way to communicate with it), the gremlin admits there's more going on. The gremlins work for a tougher gremlin named Kurshkin, and Kurshkin works for a scary ghost. The pugwampis don't know much beyond that, but they insist that both Kurshkin and Kurshkin's boss are "up to something, and it won't be good for the stuck-up wizards."

PUGWAMPIS (4) CREATURE 0

Pathfinder Bestiary 193

Initiative Perception +6

Ranged ❖ thrown bottle +6 (nonlethal, range increment 10 feet), **Damage** 1d6 bludgeoning

Losing the Fight: If the heroes find themselves overwhelmed by the gremlins, they can return to Esi (or to anyone else on campus) and admit defeat without consequence. Esi can gather a more experienced group of initiates to deal with the gremlins instead.

XP Award: If the heroes remove the gremlins from campus without resorting to violence, award them XP as though they had defeated the gremlins in combat. If the heroes learn about Kurshkin from the gremlins, award them an additional 30 XP.

Cascade Bearer Assignment

The next day, Anchor Root, Mariama Keitana, and Chizire wait at the usual meeting spot. Read or paraphrase the following.

Three figures wait in front of the dorms, though one has curled up on a blanket in a miraculously dry spot and seems half asleep. Mariama observes the drowsing catfolk with detached interest before turning to raise a hand in greeting. "From an objective standpoint, it's really impressive how he can sleep anywhere. Anyway, we're Cascade Bearers. Or at least, I am, and Anchor Root is filling in because Chizire is... Chizire. Cascade Bearers advance magical theory. It's also our job to make new magic safe for everyone to use, so we don't have a repeat of the exploding nose incident. We don't talk about the exploding nose incident.

"Since you've shown us there are gremlins around, we're going to do some sparkly finger wiggles to help deal with that. We need some special oils to do the ritual, though. Anchor Root's here to tell you what to get."

The small gnoll squeaks and flinches as attention turns to her. "U-um... we need scarlet cap oil, bone oil, and..." Anchor Root whimpers and fidgets her paws together. "C-caterpillar oil. But they need to be the right... u-um, I'll just show you."

"If you have trouble making the oil, come back here and I'll wake Chizire up. He's good at brewing," Mariama adds. "Be done in eight hours, or you'll miss dinner. And try to have fun!"

Anchor Root explains that the heroes must recover bones to render into bone oil, a specific type of red mushroom growing outside the city, and several fuzzy caterpillars found in the nearby jungle. Anchor Root nervously glosses over the fact that the caterpillars must also be rendered into oil. She fidgets when asked questions, and any attempts to reassure or give pep-talk to the gnoll seem to make her shrink even further into her shell.

As noted, Mariama expects the heroes to acquire all three oils and complete a ritual under her direction within 8 hours.

THAT'S GOING ON YOUR PERMANENT RECORD

As students at a prestigious magical university, the heroes have options that heroes of other Adventure Paths don't have, including running to the teachers for help if a situation seems too difficult or dangerous. The exchange for this additional protection is additional responsibilities; wandering adventuring bands often escape accountability for their misdeeds, but the Magaambya will hold students to account. Gross violations of law or other misconduct, like assault or grave robbing, might see a student heavily punished or even expelled. These social consequences help make up for the relative lack of danger that the heroes face during this early section of the Adventure Path.

BONE OIL

Anchor Root tells the heroes she needs "lucky bones," but she can't describe how she knows which bones are lucky and which aren't; heroes with targeted divination spells such as *object reading* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 222) can identify bones as lucky or not. Anchor Root suggests that the heroes simply bring her a large assortment of bones and let her pick out the lucky ones. There are several avenues the heroes might pursue to get a collection of bones.

The most straightforward source of bones is a local butcher. Nantambu's butchers normally save meat bones to make broth. Out of respect for the Magaambya, a butcher gives leftover bones to the heroes for free, so long as the heroes wait an hour for the butcher to get some free time to bag them up. Heroes willing to pay 1 gp for a butcher's time can get the bones immediately.

Finding about other sources of bones in Nantambu—"lucky" or not—requires an hour of time and a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to Gather Information. A successful check points the heroes to stinking garbage heaps where they can find bones available for those who don't mind getting dirty. On a critical success, the heroes hear about a cow carcass just outside of town. According to rumor, a farmer brought the cow to market along the crowded road when the cow stood stock still, uttered the words, "A market in the city? Death would be better!" and died on the spot. No one has bothered to take care of the unusual cow's remains just yet. The rumor isn't true; the cow died naturally, albeit suddenly. Its bones are fresh and so "lucky" that they grant a +2 circumstance bonus to checks to prepare the bone oil.

While the heroes could, in theory, dig up bones from a local graveyard, this course of action carries so many risks and so little benefit that it's outside the scope of this adventure.

Making Oil: Once the heroes have returned with the bones and Anchor Root has selected the correct ones to use, the heroes must carbonize the bones by burning them before using the sludgy remains to make the bone oil. A hero can take 1 hour to craft the oil with a successful DC 17 Crafting or Nature check. Failure means the hero doesn't extract the oil but retains the ingredients to try again, and a critical failure ruins the bones entirely.

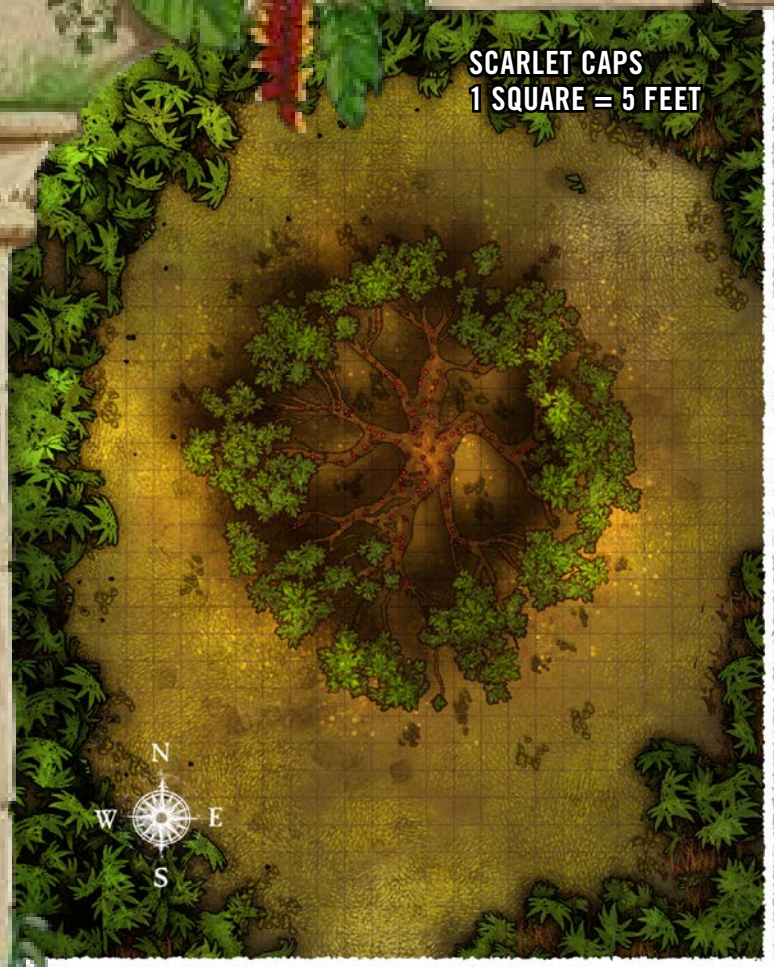
If none of the heroes have confidence in their skills to craft the bone oil, Mariama puts slugs on Chizire's face until he wakes up and then forces the catfolk to make the bone oil instead. Chizire automatically succeeds at crafting the oil, but he takes 2 hours instead of 1 hour to do so.

SCARLET CAP OIL MODERATE 1

Anchor Root shows the heroes a cluster of dried, red, cup-shaped mushrooms to help them properly identify the correct fungus. She describes the area of the jungle where she found the fungi and suggests that the heroes could find fresh mushrooms there (as they can't use the dried mushrooms to make the oil). Fortunately, the scarlet cap mushrooms don't look like any kind of poisonous mushrooms in the area, meaning the heroes likely won't make a fatal miscategorization, but she needs mushrooms that have received a lot of sunlight and moonlight, which means harvesting the mushrooms growing high on a jungle tree. Anchor Root also adds, "Redridge mother calls them tree blood" before flinching and apologizing.

Though the scarlet caps are relatively uncommon, they grow in the area where Anchor Root described, about 1 hour outside of Nantambu. A tree covered with mushrooms as high as 20 feet up its trunk stands in the middle of its clearing. Several wide leaves droop down from the top of the tree. A hero can climb it with a successful DC 10 Athletics check.

Creature: A malevolent myceloid named Umbo hides in the leaves above the mushrooms. Umbo was kicked out of his colony for selfishness and cruelty even beyond what the myceloids considered tolerable. He has kept watch over this clearing, hoping to ambush travelers, and the heroes provide an excellent opportunity. He tries to stay hidden in the leaves until he sees what the heroes are up to. Once he realizes that one of them is climbing the tree he's in, he attacks. For his first action, he grabs one of the large leaves and puts all his weight on it; the leaf bends nearly to the ground, deposits him to a space that he chooses anywhere adjacent to the tree trunk, then breaks off



(doing so uses a single Interact action with the move trait). He then uses his Emit Spores ability to inflict as many of the heroes as possible with purple pox. Umbo has no interest in negotiation, as he only wants to feast on a meal of humanoid flesh, but he flees into the jungle if reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points.

UMBO CREATURE 3

RARE NE MEDIUM FUNGUS

Weak variant myceloid (*Pathfinder Bestiary 3* 181)

Perception +8; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Languages Undercommon; telepathy 100 feet (myceloids and those afflicted by purple pox only)

Skills Stealth +9, Survival +8

Str +3, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** –1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

AC 18; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

HP 50; **Weaknesses** slashing 5

Spore Pop If Umbo is reduced to 0 HP by a critical hit, he pops, forcing him to immediately Emit Spores, even if he has already used the ability that day.

Speed 20 feet

Melee ❖ fist +11, **Damage** 1d8+3 bludgeoning plus purple pox

Emit Spores ❖ **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** Umbo expels spores in a 10-foot burst centered on a corner of his own space. This cloud lasts until the start of the myceloid's next turn. Each creature that is in the cloud or enters it is exposed to purple pox.

Purple Pox (disease) Myceloids are immune; **Saving Throw** DC 18 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 day); **Stage 2** 4d6 poison damage, stupefied 3, and the creature is compelled to seek out the nearest myceloid colony—this compulsion is a mental emotion effect (1 day); **Stage 3** The creature dies. Over 24 hours, its corpse becomes bloated and bursts, releasing a new, fully grown myceloid.

Spore Domination ❖❖ (emotion, enchantment, incapacitation, mental, primal) Umbo targets one creature affected by purple pox within 30 feet. That creature must attempt a DC 18 Will save. It is then temporarily immune to spore domination for 10 minutes.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success Until the end of its next turn, the target is helpful to myceloids and can't take hostile actions against them. If attacked by Umbo, the target is freed from this effect at the end of Umbo's turn.

Failure As success, but for 1 minute.

Critical Failure As success, but until the purple pox is cured.

Treasure: Umbo has stashed a few treasures from past victims inside a crook in the tree. This cache is well-concealed from the ground, requiring a hero to succeed at a DC 25 Perception check to spot it from there, but anyone climbing up to harvest the mushrooms automatically spots the following items: a *holly bush feather token*, a *wolf fang*, and a *hand of the mage*.

Making Oil: Pressing the oil from the scarlet caps is simple and requires no check, but it does require gradual squeezing that takes 1 hour. Canny heroes might think to press the mushrooms while they walk back to the city to save time.

CATERPILLAR OIL

Anchor Root cautiously shows off a pet caterpillar of hers as an example of what the heroes should look for: a colorful larva with fuzzy tufts. Anchor Root's caterpillar sits placidly on a branch in a tub in her room. She warns the heroes that the fuzzy-looking caterpillars are extremely painful to touch and must be collected very carefully. She also shamefully admits that she can't bear to watch the heroes kill the caterpillars to make them into caterpillar oil. Troubling Anchor Root further over this fact causes her attitude to worsen; she spends the rest of the day crying uncontrollably.

The caterpillars live in the jungle, but the heroes don't need to go nearly as far from the city to find them as they did for the scarlet cap mushrooms. On

the other hand, the caterpillars aren't as easy to find. After an hour of searching, the heroes can find some caterpillars with a successful DC 15 Nature or Survival check or a DC 20 Perception check. The heroes should collect the caterpillars without touching them, but any such method of collecting them will do. If the heroes invent a complicated method to capture the caterpillars, you can ask for a DC 15 Sleight of Hand or Thievery check, with failure meaning that the hero has inadvertently grabbed a caterpillar. A hero who touches a caterpillar more than just casually brushing against it must attempt a DC 13 Fortitude save or become sickened 1 from the pain and unable to reduce their sickened condition below 1 for 1 minute (or 1 hour on a critical failure). This is a poison effect.

Making Oil: Squashing the caterpillars into oil takes only a few minutes.

THE RITUAL

Once the heroes have returned to Spire Dormitory with all three types of oil, Mariama takes them and contributes a string of tiny bells made of cold iron. If the heroes failed to acquire all three oils, she scratches her head, opines that maybe the task was too advanced, and dismisses the heroes for the remainder of the day.

Once the three oils are prepared, Mariama explains the concept of gremlin bells, as described in the sidebar on page 19 (as well as in the sidebar on page 192 of the *Pathfinder Bestiary*). If the heroes already know about gremlin bells, and especially if they used them against the pugwampis the previous day, she's exuberant about the heroes' practical knowledge and asks for details of that encounter.

Mariama notes that bells usually only work because the gremlins believe that bells ward them off. However, the Magaambya has been working on using gremlin bells to create a stronger magical ward and sees this task as an opportunity to test the bells. The first test area is the storage room from which the heroes ejected the pugwampis.

If no hero has the proficiency to act as the ritual's primary caster, Mariama has Anchor Root do it. Mariama asks as many heroes who can serve as secondary casters to do so while other heroes watch.

For more information on rituals, see page 408 of the *Core Rulebook*. As a 1st-level ritual, *fey abeyance* has a DC of 21 for the primary caster and a DC of 16 for the secondary casters.

FEY ABEYANCE RITUAL 1

RARE ABJURATION

Cast 1 hour; **Cost** rare oils, cold iron bells worth at least 5 gp; **Secondary Casters** 1

Primary Check Nature (trained), **Secondary Checks** Crafting, Intimidation, Occultism, Performance

Area An enclosed area up to 60 feet × 60 feet, up to 20 feet high

Duration 1 week

You ward an area with cold iron bells, protecting it from the influence of the first world. Fey creatures feel uncomfortable within the area and all physical attacks against them are considered cold iron for the purposes of their Weaknesses and Resistances. Furthermore, you set up bells within 3 squares within the area (usually at entrances). When a fey creature begins its turn in a square containing bells, it takes mental damage equal to its Weakness to cold iron, if any. This damage is nonlethal.

Critical Success You may designate up to 6 squares to contain bells.

Success The ritual succeeds.

Failure The ritual has no effect.

Critical Failure The ritual has no effect and attracts the attention of a troublesome fey creature. At the GM's discretion, it might be hostile or merely mischievous.

After the heroes have attempted the ritual, whether it succeeds or fails, Mariama notes that the ritual has its potential uses but might have unintended consequences since it doesn't target gremlins specifically and could injure any kind of fey, even benevolent ones. She dismisses the heroes until the following morning.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for each type of oil they recover to a maximum of 90 XP. Give them 80 XP for attempting the ritual, but increase this amount to 120 XP if the ritual succeeds.

Emerald Boughs Assignment

When the heroes arrive at the meeting place the next morning, Ignaci and Strands-of-Glowing-Dawn Tzeniwe are there to meet them. Ignaci compliments any particularly well-dressed or good-looking heroes before explaining the next assignment. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Good morning," Ignaci says with a smile. "As you've no doubt gathered, we're here to task you with your assignment for the day. Our ever-thoughtful colleague Esi suggested that each of us petitioning to join the five different branches of the Magaambya take turns in requesting your assistance. Strands-of-Glowing-Dawn Tzeniwe and I are hoping to become a part of the Emerald Boughs. Our field of study is the world as it is. We study the communities, people, and events of the present day, if you will. There are some people who feel that simple observation and investigation makes us the Magaambya's spies, but that misses the point entirely.

"Today, I'd like you to help us deliver the mail." Ignaci produces a basket filled with letters and parcels. "It's not a flashy task, but it's vitally important to the members of the local communities. If you find you have time to listen, people are often very willing to share news with those engaged in crucial public service."

Tzeniwe adds, "Many recipients are far outside Nantambu, so I have rented elephant birds for you to ride for the day." She steps over to the large silk sacks bulging with food and odd-looking creams. "I have also packed you snacks for the trip, some hot coffee, spare umbrellas, dry towels, fresh socks, muscle balm–" She suddenly stops, pulling a toy elephant covered in sticky webs out of one of the bags. "Ugh, Zanvi! Sorry, one of my children was eager to help pack."

The elephant birds roost nearby; each is a docile, flightless bird that's Large in size and used to being ridden as a mount. There's one for each hero. A hero can control the birds by their reins with no problems. Even characters who have never ridden one before get the hang of it quickly.

The basket contains two dozen letters and parcels, all jumbled together. Ignaci and Tzeniwe know they're asking a lot from the heroes to sort all this mail out, but that's the heroes' task for the day—for as long as it takes.

NEITHER RAIN NOR HEAT NOR GLOOM OF NIGHT

The heroes can easily deliver most of the letters, most of which have clear addresses in or near Nantambu. As Ignaci observed, many recipients are happy to talk with the heroes about recent happenings in their lives. A woman named Chinasa is excited for her niece's wedding and plans to sew the bride a gold embroidered dress, while a woman named Ige talks about her work rehabilitating injured jungle birds and releasing them back into the wild. Musubu introduces heroes to his newest puppy, who he found stuck up a tree, while a man named Jatau offers the heroes a jar of jam after having made too much. These easy deliveries take only 2 hours.

Thirteen deliveries pose difficulties, as described below. The heroes might be out late making these deliveries, but recipients are generally happy to receive the mail at unusual hours. Recipients approached near their dinnertime sometimes offer a meal, so heroes out all evening might receive a lot of food.

Unclear Directions (5 letters): Five letters have illegible addresses due to terrible handwriting. A hero must succeed at a DC 18 Society check to Decipher Writing to determine a letter's intended recipient; on a failure, the hero can't determine where to bring the letter. (Remember that Decipher Writing is a trained action.) Another method of making these deliveries involves asking around for help, which requires a hero to succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check to Gather Information. A hero can't retry failures on these checks, as the correct address simply eludes them, but another hero can try instead. Delivering each letter takes half an hour.

Descriptive Addresses (4 parcels): Rural areas far from the city don't have standardized addresses. Instead, these parcels bear unhelpful directions in place of addresses, such as, "Chukwu who lives up the road from the creek," or, in one particularly awful case, "You know Mubasu, his mother's Inyene from Abwele, but he's from the city, grew up in Ejosa, and moved when he got married. Lives with his in-laws now, has many children and seven dogs and an ostrich and four cats which I told him will steal his baby's breath, but he won't listen. He has a shrine to Gozreh in front of his house, but half the wave's head fell off and it looks like a lump now." The best way to deliver these letters is to keep an eye out for relevant landmarks, which

requires a hero to succeed at a DC 15 Survival check. The heroes can Gather Information to deliver these packages, too, but the DC for the Diplomacy check is 18. Again, heroes can't retry failures on these checks. Delivering each parcel takes 1 hour.

Delivery Devilry (1 letter): One letter turns out to be addressed to the heroes themselves—or, rather, to "Magaambyan Parcel Deliverers." The letter inside describes how a previous group of initiates misdelivered a parcel a few weeks ago. The angry grandmother writing the letter eventually realized that the package never reached her granddaughter and is furious as a result. Should the heroes ask their fellow initiates, Tzeniwe tells them that fixing postal mistakes is part of the heroes' duties for the day and that they should resolve the situation if they can.

The heroes can find the source of the issue—the parcel was delivered to the correct street but the wrong house. The resulting argument has already become the talk of the neighborhood. The person the parcel was intended for, Ndidi, obviously wants the parcel back. The woman who received the wrongly directed package, Jatia, argues that since the venerable Magaambya had given it to her, the package now belongs to her by right. The object of the argument is an incredible Mauxi stained glass lamp, which undoubtedly cost a lot of money to both purchase and to deliver intact.

Jatia is clearly proud of her unintentional gift and feels no shame at being accused of stealing it, so pleas to good nature or fairness to get her to return it—in other words, any uses of Diplomacy—have a DC of 26. A hero who succeeds at a DC 18 Deception check to Lie to Jatia (such as to convince her that the lamp is cursed or otherwise undesirable) convinces her to give it up. A hero can Coerce Jatia into giving up the lamp with a successful DC 16 Intimidation check. However, such a tactic spawns complaints from neighbors, and the resulting backlash infuriates Ignaci and Tzeniwe and makes them less likely to befriend the heroes. If the heroes want to use magic or other trickery, you can use the statistics of a barkeep (*Gamemastery Guide* 238) for Jatia.

As a last-ditch effort, a hero can attempt to sneak in and steal the lamp, although stealing from a townsperson shouldn't be their first choice! A hero who succeeds at a DC 16 Stealth check surreptitiously retrieves the lamp. Failure means the hero is forced to flee Jatia's house without the prize, while a critical failure means the heroes get caught and embroiled in legal trouble for the rest of the day. While Ignaci simply shrugs off legal entanglements with a smile, Tzeniwe is angry and unlikely to befriend the heroes, and the heroes can't make any more deliveries.

Dealing with this misdelivered parcel takes 1 hour, or even longer if the heroes spend a lot of time interacting with Jatia and Ndidi. If the heroes ultimately can't resolve the issue, Ignaci and Tzeniwe are visibly disappointed, but they aren't mad.

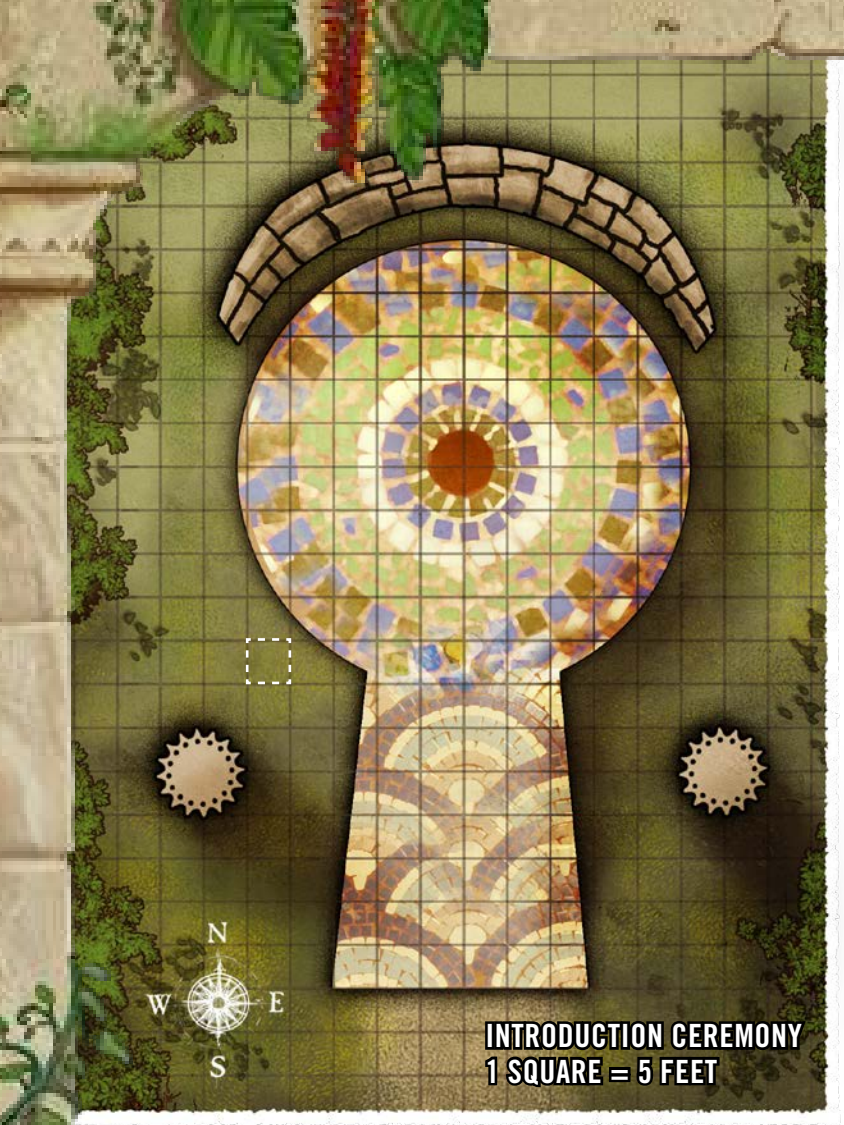
Deific Missives (3 letters): Three letters are addressed to gods and include instructions on how to "deliver" them. The first such letter is addressed to Gozreh, deity of wind and weather, and requests that the letter be attached to a kite, flown high in the air, and then cut free. If the heroes don't want to purchase a kite for 1 sp, they can craft one with a successful DC 14 Crafting check. The rainy weather is very poor for kite flying, however; a hero must succeed at a DC 17 Athletics or Sleight of Hand check to get the kite into the air. On a critical failure, the kite is destroyed in the endeavor—it's torn in the sharp branches of a tree, struck by lightning, or meets some other similarly dramatic and destructive end.

The second letter is addressed to Nethys and explains that five different spells must be cast upon the letter at once (within the same round). Fortunately, the letter-writer has no qualms if the letter is destroyed in the process and in fact expects that result.

The final letter is to Mazludeh, empyreal lord of stewardship, community, and snakes. The instructions are that the enclosed message (a short request that a new canal wall be strong and reliable) must be transcribed onto an egg then fed to a snake; it further notes that the snake's refusal to eat the egg is a bad omen. Fortunately, Nantambu's shrine to Mazludeh has many quail eggs to inscribe and several egg-eating snakes to act as divine messengers. Any hero asking around about this unusual delivery method is directed to the shrine and the friendly priests there. A recent community project resulted in a lot of prayers, so the shrine's snakes, unfortunately for the heroes, aren't very hungry today. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature check can find a snake that's interested enough to take the egg, or a hero who succeeds at a DC 19 Thievery check can slip an egg into a full snake's mouth (on a critical failure, the priests spot this behavior and eject the party from the shrine). A hero can also search the nearby jungle for a hungrier egg-eating snake, but the rain means the snakes have taken shelter; a hero must succeed at a DC 23 Survival check to find one.

Dealing with each divine letter takes 1 hour, or more if the heroes do a lot of shopping for the items needed to "deliver" them.

When the heroes have delivered all of the letters to the best of their abilities, Tzeniwe offers the party hot ginger beer to help shrug off the rain. Ignaci thanks the



heroes for their assistance and instructs them to return to the same meeting point tomorrow morning for their next assignment.

XP Award: Award the heroes 10 XP for completing each unclear or descriptive delivery (to a maximum of 90 XP). Award them 30 XP for resolving the misdelivered parcel and for "delivering" each deity missive (to a maximum of 120 XP).

Uzunjati Assignment

When the heroes arrive for their last assignment of the week, they find Okoro and Noxolo waiting for them. Read or paraphrase the following.

An athletic young man waves enthusiastically from the pathway in front of the dormitory. Off to the side, on the mossy earth, a woman in a handsome dashiki sways and casually dances, snapping her fingers to an imaginary beat. A bizarre beast resembling a cross between a two-foot-long crocodile and a bear cub prances and nibbles at her ankles as she shuffles and snaps.

"Hi there!" the man says with a wide smile. "I'm Okoro, and this is Noxolo. We're part of the Uzunjati! Well, not yet, but the tale of our becoming shall be a good tale to hear, someday. The Uzunjati tell stories to others and learn new stories in turn. Today, we want you to tell us the story of your past week so that we can learn it and pass it on to others. It is not only training for you in how to tell a story, but training for us in how to be good listeners. We all benefit!"

Okoro and Noxolo make it clear that they want a "story" about the heroes' week, not a bare event-by-event recounting. The heroes can either tell individual stories of specific events during the week or collaborate to tell a story together. Part of the assignment is meant to gauge (both to the Uzunjati students and to you as the GM) what events interested or stood out to the players. Telling a skillful story might require a hero to succeed at a DC 15 Performance check, but you should allow for other relevant skills or even disregard the skill check entirely if the players are really engaged in the storytelling.

While Okoro and Noxolo accept any tale the heroes wish to tell, if more than half of the characters fail the Performance check or refuse to take the assignment seriously, they consider the entire cohort to be a group of fools. This might impair potential friendships with either of them, but Okoro is likely a bit more forgiving.

Once the heroes finish, Noxolo has a follow-up question for them: what is the moral of the collective story—that is, what lesson is the story trying to tell? The heroes can decide on morals independently or collectively, but the assignment isn't complete without a moral.

The Pending Ceremony: Once the heroes have told their tales and answered Noxolo's question, Okoro and Noxolo both thank the heroes and let them know they have the rest of the day to themselves. Noxolo says that Teacher Ot wants the heroes to meet him at an outdoor ceremony stage erected on the grounds at dawn the next morning.

Teacher Ot didn't say why, but Noxolo is pretty sure it's for their cohort's Introduction Ceremony. The Introduction Ceremony is something all new initiates go through; it's where the teacher who admitted them to the school (in this case, Teacher Ot) presents them to other Magaambyan teachers. Okoro reminds the heroes to wear their beaded bracelets, and Noxolo suggests they dress nicely.

As the heroes have the rest of the day off, this time provides a good opportunity for interactions with the other students. It's also fine to simply skip to the following morning.

XP Award: For successfully sharing their stories, award the heroes 30 XP.

INTRODUCTION CEREMONY SEVERE 1

Takulu Ot has requested to meet the heroes at dawn, a half hour before the ceremony is intended to begin. He planned to meet them early to walk through what's expected of them, but he's delayed at the last minute with other business. Takulu doesn't consider this delay much of a problem, as the ceremony isn't complicated and a half hour gives plenty of time. However, it means the heroes arrive alone at the site, where danger lurks.

When the heroes dispatched the pugwampis from the storage barn and erected the *fey abeyance* ritual there, the gremlin boss Kurshkin mistook these events as precursors to a new purge of gremlins from the campus. She had already decided to target the party, planning to kill a few heroes and embarrass the rest. Kurshkin overheard that the heroes were going to be honored at an outdoor stage, so she brought along a vexgit gremlin to sabotage the stage beforehand. When she arrives and sees the heroes coming early as well, she decides to just attack them and not bother with sabotage.

The ceremony stage is a simple platform decorated with intricate circular mosaics and a wide ramp descending to the grass. The wooden platform is elevated about 3 feet off the ground on sturdy wooden supports (the gremlins were going to wreck these supports, but they didn't have time). Two 8-foot-tall pillars flank the ramp to the south, and a low, curved, stone wall to the north can provide audience seating.

Despite the sunny weather on the day of the ceremony, the ground is still very slick from the recent rains. The grass is difficult terrain.

Snare: Although they haven't yet gotten around to actual sabotage, Havvix created a hampering snare (*Core Rulebook* 590) in the dotted lines on the map. A hero must succeed at a DC 18 Perception check to spot the snare before it's triggered. The gremlins are Tiny, and therefore don't trigger the snare.

Creatures: Kurshkin lurks under the stage with a vexgit gremlin named Havvix. Havvix isn't particularly loyal to Kurshkin—indeed, he's not really loyal to anyone other than himself—but he's itching for a fight. Havvix loves the sounds of broken bones and cries of pain. The two gremlins scamper up onto the stage to fight from what they consider the high ground once the heroes get close.

In a fight, Kurshkin prefers to stay close to her foes but out of melee range so that she can employ her Unluck Aura yet attack with her shortbow from a safe distance. She goads Havvix to rush into melee with as many of the heroes as he can. If pressed into melee, Kurshkin throws down her shortbow to draw her shortsword.

Kurshkin doesn't fear bells at all; she's far too old to be taken in by such superstitions. Havvix, however, is frightened 1 while within 30 feet of anyone displaying small metal bells.

Havvix doesn't retreat from a fight until reduced to fewer than 6 Hit Points. Kurshkin is more circumspect. She makes a tactical retreat if reduced to fewer than 16 Hit Points. If reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points, she makes a false show of surrendering, only to cast *spider sting* when the heroes drop their guard. She then runs away. If Kurshkin escapes, the heroes might face her again in Chapter 3.

KURSHKIN CREATURE 3

Page 86
Initiative Stealth +11

HAVVIX CREATURE 1

Male vexgit gremlin (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 134)
Initiative Stealth +5

Gremlin Interrogation: A captured gremlin immediately blames their leader, Stone Ghost, for the attack. Note that Havvix only speaks Undercommon, so Kurshkin is the most likely gremlin to give the heroes any information. They know almost nothing about the mysterious man beyond his ghostly nature, his familiarity with the grounds, and his demands for obedience. The only way they know to reach Stone Ghost is through winding tunnels that are nearly too small for a gremlin, making them much too small for anyone else. The tunnels twist and turn so much that they aren't even sure where Stone Ghost's chambers are. They gleefully boast that there are many more gremlins around the school than anyone realizes.

Teacher Ot Arrives: Whether the heroes are defeated, victorious, or simply ran away, Takulu Ot soon arrives and asks them what happened. He isn't upset if the heroes killed the gremlins, as clearly they were defending themselves from a malicious ambush. If the heroes learned about Stone Ghost or that the school has even more gremlins, Takulu takes these reports seriously and resolves to look into them.

Takulu cancels the Introduction Ceremony due to the shock and concern caused by the gremlin attack. If the heroes hang around the area anyway, they can get quick introductions from a few of the teachers who come by to ask questions or congratulate the heroes for thwarting the gremlins, allowing them to meet, in advance, the three other teachers they'll encounter in the next chapter.

XP Award: If the heroes learn about Stone Ghost, award them an additional 30 XP.

When the world was still young and there were few tales to spin by the firelight, there was a young woman who lived near the base of a mountain. Some say it was the tallest mountain to have ever existed, but who can say for sure now?

What matters is that one day, she heard the whispers of the rains and the caress of the winds and followed them up the mountain. She stayed there for a day and a night and returned as the next dawn broke. "Where did you go?" her family asked her. She replied, "I walked up the mountain and the rains told me secrets of how to move them." And though no one understood, village life moved on.

As the weather turned crisp, a stray spark landed on the drying grasses and the fire that followed would have immolated the village. While the people scrambled to get their buckets and bowls and blankets to quench the blaze, the woman who had walked up the mountain stepped forth. Her words and hands swept the river over the fire and put it out in an instant. The people stared, unable to understand what they had seen, before all crying out at once.

"You can command the river!" someone exclaimed. "You must be a god!"

"No," she insisted softly as she backed away. "I simply listened to the winds and rains, and they showed me ways I can help."

"The rains, of course!" cried a farmer. "Then you will bless us with healthy crops!"

"And you can bring us river fish," cried a fisherman, "and ease our weary backs!"

More demands rang out from the people: heal the sick, raise a house, bless a child, find a truth, grace a marriage, bring justice, bring peace, give love, give joy, give and give and give. The woman backed further and further from the demands until she felt the cool stone of the mountain behind her. The mountain had never asked her for anything despite all that it had given. She retreated further still and became one with the mountain, escaping the incessant demands of her village forever.

Magic can do much, but those who wield it deserve respect and peace, lest they vanish like the woman into the mountain.

CHAPTER 2: FIRST OF MANY

The heroes can recuperate from the events at the Introduction Ceremony, but they have only a brief moment of respite before the daily flow of life and learning at the Magaambya sweeps them up. The whole experience of the academy is now open to them: to attend classes, make friends with their fellow students, and grow in power and skill. Their Perquisite period of service continues, but rather than a series of specific daily tasks, they have flexibility to work their Perquisite obligations around their classes.

The events of this chapter should be framed around, and woven with, the academic advancement rules beginning on page 62. You can gloss over the first few months of classes by having your players attempt their first check to Study as a downtime activity (as the heroes likely prefer different branches, they can attend different classes). Experiences in Chapter 1 might prompt some heroes to change their primary or secondary branches, which they can do freely before this first Study check. Part of the reason new initiates receive tasks from each branch is to ensure they make a more informed choice.

The heroes should have a second opportunity for academic downtime during this chapter, and perhaps even a third or fourth, at your discretion. There's no hurry in the events here, as Stone Ghost and the gremlins are slow in their work and careful to not expose their plans just yet. Run the events in this chapter at a pace that works for your group.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first presents services for some of the Magaambya's teachers. The second contains vignettes with the heroes' fellow students. The third is this chapter's conclusion, when the heroes advance from initiates to attendants. This event is the students' First Masking, and it doesn't go as planned.

Meet the Teachers

The following four encounters don't need to be run in order and can be interspersed as you see fit throughout the heroes' class attendance. They give opportunities to get to know some teachers at the Magaambya.

BUG PROBLEMS

Koride Ulawa (CN female human naturalist) is popular among many students for her laid-back style and love of the macabre. She's a Rain-Scribe with a primary focus on magical ecology. Her favorite research areas are the parts of nature that many people find repulsive: fungus, decay, and insects. Her open and honest fascination with repellent subjects is oddly charming and often contagious. She's the Magaambya's most skilled entomologist in generations.

CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

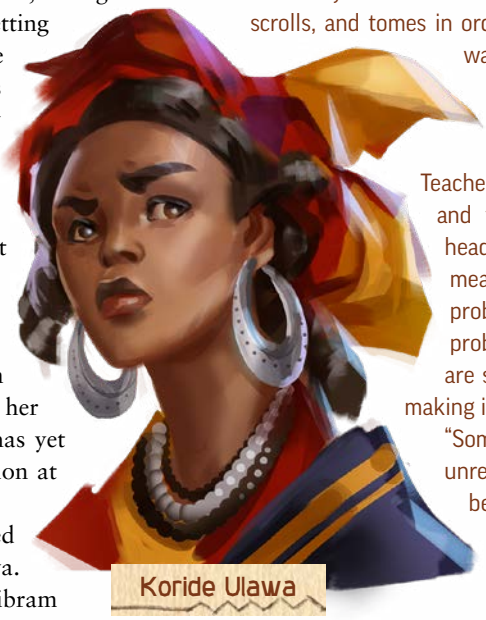
In this chapter, the heroes embark upon their first of many semesters of academic work. Their lessons are broken up with directives to help several teachers as well as opportunities to get to know their fellow initiates. During these tasks, the heroes discover that several infestations of insects have afflicted the Magaambya. This infestation reaches its height at the heroes' First Masking ceremony, when they formally advance from initiates to attendants. Several enormous insects attack the ceremony to disrupt it, and the heroes have the opportunity to demonstrate their valor in front of their teachers and peers.

CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 2 are as follows.

- *animal staff*
- *bracelet of dashing*
- *bracers of missile deflection*
- cat's eye elixir
- *chest feather token*
- *hat of the magi*
- moderate antidote (centipede venom only)
- *onyx dog wondrous figurine*
- *potion of leaping*
- *potion of water breathing*
- *scroll of augury*
- *scroll of faerie fire*
- *scroll of fleet step*
- *scroll of negate aroma*

Koride's many flaws also endear her to students. She frequently neglects her commitments, failing to show up for classes or forgetting to follow up on homework she assigned. She has a reckless disregard for rules, especially rules that promote safety, and she casually dismisses them as impediments to education. She's shameless about giving the best opportunities and materials to her favorite students, overlooking their mistakes with obvious indulgence. In short, she's an irresponsible teacher, but with her popularity and the fact that she has yet to cause any real harm, her position at the Magaambya remains secure.



Koride Ulawa

The NPC initiates have varied opinions about Teacher Ulawa. Anchor Root, Chizire, and Haibram all like her teaching style; Anchor Root is one of Koride's favorites, despite being exceedingly uncomfortable with that "honor." Esi can't stand Koride and wonders aloud why everyone doesn't agree that she's an awful teacher and a terrible person. Ignaci and Mariama do their best to avoid her, keeping their heads down in her classes. The other initiates in the Spire Dormitory don't really have an opinion.

For her part, Koride views new initiates as useful tools for her own ends, but she doesn't see any reason to expend much energy being friendly with them.

When Koride first received reports of insects around the Magaambya acting strangely, she ignored them, but when her own specimens started acting odd, she had to admit something was amiss. Further research was required, preferably on a cross-section of insect specimens. Since there's far too much ground for Koride to cover alone while still attending to her teaching duties (and, more to the point, because she would prefer not to), she delegates specimen gathering to the school's newest students.

This task begins when Koride calls the heroes to her office. Her office is in the Heron Archives, one of first ten buildings constructed for the Magaambya in the days of Old-Mage Jatembe. Each of these venerable buildings is named for one of the Ten Magic Warriors (in this case, Black Heron). When the heroes arrive at Koride's office, read or paraphrase the following.

Heavy curtains cover the windows in Teacher Ulawa's large office, with several oil lamps emitting a low light. A dizzying variety of glass encasements feature insects and reptiles, and a large cage hanging in a corner holds a small and surly vulture. Bookshelves are stuffed with papers, scrolls, and tomes in orderly piles. Shadow boxes on the walls hold dead insects pinned open to display their inner anatomy.

"You might have heard I'm the insect expert here," says Teacher Ulawa, looking up from a scroll and tucking an errant piece of her headscarf back into place. "That means when the school has bug problems, they like to make it my problem. And since the group of you are still in your Perquisite period, I'm making it your problem.

"Something–or, more likely, several unrelated and coincident things–have been disturbing insects around the Magaambya, enough to threaten the ecological balance if left unchecked. Anchor Root and a few others have told me that something seems to be agitating them." For a moment, genuine concern crosses Teacher Ulawa's face, proof that she's perhaps not as dismissive or disaffected as she seems. The look quickly fades. "Go to the places on this list, take note of any strange activity, and collect insect samples for me. Take immense care in collecting samples–further disruptions could cause the very problems I prefer to avoid." She flaps a dismissive hand and returns to her work. "Oh, and do remember to wash thoroughly before returning with my samples."

The heroes might volunteer gremlins as the cause, particularly if they know that some gremlins can speak with insects. Koride dismisses these suggestions with another rude wave of her hand, as "premature conclusions are the bane of logical evaluation."

Koride provides a list of three locations on campus: the Leshy Gardens, the canal near the Speaker's Stage, and the dining hall's kitchen. After she gives the list to the heroes, she has another thought before taking back the list and scribbling "talk to Anchor Root about centipedes" on it. Koride is impatient for the heroes to get started, though she answers reasonable questions they have (such as where to find the locations).

The heroes can approach these locations in whatever order they desire.

Spire Dormitory

The heroes can find Anchor Root back at their dormitory. Anchor Root has noticed an uptick in the pests, particularly centipedes, burrowing into the dormitory walls. She knows that Koride would

appreciate a specimen. Anchor Root's chicken familiar has eaten a lot of centipedes recently, and she worries that centipede venom might make her familiar sick. With Chizire's help, she brewed a pot of centipede antivenom. This concoction spoils after a day, so Anchor Root encourages the heroes to drink up if they'll be poking around for centipedes. She already fed it to her chicken and mumbles that there's not likely to be too many side effects. The pot contains one dose of moderate antidote per hero, but the antidote's bonus to Fortitude saving throws only applies to saves against centipede venom.

Ultimately, the dormitory doesn't have many centipedes, and they've stayed well-hidden to avoid being eaten by Anchor Root's chicken. A hero must poke around the dorm for an hour and succeed at a DC 14 Nature or Survival check to capture a specimen.

Leshy Gardens

This overgrown section of campus is the domain of several leshys, who are uncommon elsewhere on campus (and in Nantambu for that matter). The chief groundskeeper, **Thema** (CG female elf gardener 6), discourages the leshys from ranging far from their patch of overgrown land because they have a tendency to cause mischief. The riotous Leshy Gardens is therefore a tangle of trees, shrubs, and vines amid carefully cultivated green space, such as sparring fields and picnic spots. Students sometimes come to ask the leshys for aid, particularly when stuck on a difficult assignment requiring a uniquely plant-based outlook.

Small, twisting paths lead into the Leshy Gardens, and the leshys are normally happy to have visitors. Most of the leshys are leaf leshys (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 218), but gourd leshys (*Bestiary* 218) and flytrap leshys (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 161) live here as well.

If you haven't yet run the **Starday Tournament** encounter, the leshys are busily carving large wooden plates to act as the armor for their constructs (though they haven't yet completed any constructs and they're secretive about what they're making). If you've already run the **Starday Tournament** encounter, the heroes find the leshys repairing their constructs and sharing observations about the deepest splits and scratches.

If the heroes ask the leshys about troublesome insects, a friendly gourd leshy named Shade-in-Autumn explains their problem. An infestation of bark beetles has been gnawing on the bark plates they've been working, slowing their efforts. The leshys want the insects gone, so they asked Koride Ulawa for aid.

Finding and collecting a few beetles for Koride is also easy. Heroes who look for anything unusual can attempt a DC 16 Perception check to realize that the lines in the bark made by the beetles' chewing form strange shapes. A hero looking over the patterns who succeeds at a DC 16 Arcana or Nature check realizes they resemble runes of summoning or conjuration. The beetles aren't forming these patterns consciously—they're subject to the lure of the *Vesicant Egg*.

XP Award: If the heroes identify the odd runes in the bark, award them 30 XP.

The Speaker's Stage

The west end of the island upon which the Magaambya was built extends into the canal on an artificial island. Several large stone basins form a ring around a grand stage on top of this artificial island, magically illuminating it. The Speaker's Stage was designed as a place where representatives of the school could make pronouncements to Nantambu, but just as often, Magaambya students use it to put on concerts, plays, or other performances. By tradition, these performances must always be free of charge, and they're quite popular in Nantambu, even the more amateurish ones.

Delicate water striders crowd around the island, skating back and forth on the water. The insects are plainly agitated but difficult to catch because they dart about so quickly. Fetching a specimen requires a quick hand or a good sense of the creatures' movements. A hero who succeeds at a DC 16 Nature, Survival, or Thievery check can catch one.

The activity at the Speaker's Stage draws attention from townspeople across the canal who think there might be an impromptu performance at hand. They good-naturedly shout at the heroes, asking what kind of show they're putting on. The heroes don't have to give any performance, of course, but a hero who succeeds at a DC 16 Performance check gives a spectacle that the crowd appreciates. The crowd mocks failed checks but with affable humor rather than meanness.

Treasure: If the heroes give a successful performance, a finely dressed member of the crowd steps to the edge of the canal and introduces himself in a clear voice as Asanda. A hero who succeeds at a DC 10 Society check realizes that he's one of the 11 magistrate-mayors who govern Nantambu. Whether or not the heroes realize his identity, Asanda praises the performance and insists on giving a token of his gratitude. He deftly folds a blank ledger page into a paper boat, places a *chest feather token* into it, and pushes it across the canal toward the heroes.

Keep note of whether the heroes meet Asanda here, since they encounter him—or, rather, an impostor masquerading as Asanda—in the next adventure.

Kitchen — Low 2

The dining hall is closed when the heroes arrive, even if they come during normal hours. Lumusi Yao is, uncharacteristically, in the dining hall keeping anyone from entering. She has a basket of mangoes and insists that everyone she turns away take one since she can't feed them properly. If the heroes ask about insects in the area, Lumusi sighs with relief.

"I can tell you, then, even though I don't want this to get out among the other students. We've been seeing a lot of mites recently. Many more than usual, and usual is none at all. Just a short time ago, I received a large basket of fresh cassava. When I opened it, there were so many mites on it that I dropped the basket, spilling the cassava and the mites across the floor. I asked my assistant Abena to sweep up the mess while I shooed everyone away."

Lumusi asks the heroes to help Abena and take as many mites as they'd like. She appears visibly flustered throughout the conversation, insisting that she has never had a pest problem due to a combination of minor enchantments and folk knowledge, like placing copper coins in jars of water by the window or cleaning the floors in a secret solution of lemons, marigolds, and vinegar. When she found mites despite these precautions, she asked Koride what to do.

Things are worse than Lumusi fears. A swarm of centipedes, lured to the area by the *Vesicant Egg* and drawn to the kitchen because the centipedes find mites very tasty, have done the job of removing all the mites. However, the centipede swarm is both hungry and territorial. Abena barely avoided the swarm by leaping into a large cauldron and pulling the lid closed. When the heroes enter, they see the lid rattling and hear her cries for help from inside.

Creature: Before the heroes can reach Abena's hiding place, the swarm of centipedes surges out from beneath the counters and tables. The swarm fights until reduced to 0 Hit Points and then disperses, but once the heroes defeat the swarm, they can collect individual specimens for Koride.

CENTIPEDE SWARM — CREATURE 3

Pathfinder Bestiary 61
Initiative Perception +9

Treasure: Lumusi is grateful for the heroes' help. She gives them a lemon-flavored *potion of water breathing* and two cat's eye elixirs that taste like cinnamon.

Returning to Koride

When the heroes return to Koride's office with all the insect samples they've collected, Koride is impatient for a report. When the heroes recount the insects' strange behavior, Koride's face pulls into an increasingly serious frown. She notes that their findings might indicate a larger problem—one she will look into. Koride genuinely thanks the heroes for their help, and she asks the heroes to put the insects into a terrarium (perhaps with a snide comment like "not the centipedes with the other insects, you fools, they're carnivorous" to show a bit of her characteristically sharp demeanor). She then waves the heroes away.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for each type of specimen they bring from a different location, to a maximum of 120 XP.

TAKULU'S READING LIST

Takulu Ot has run into some trouble while doing research for a personal project: the source materials he needs should be within the Magaambya, but he can't find them in any archives. Old transfer records indicate that they might be in temporary storage—specifically, in an old dormitory that was partially converted into a library but subsequently abandoned. He'd like the heroes to fetch his books but realizes this task isn't so straightforward. The dormitory-turned-library was built into the stump of an enormous tree and might be infested with insects (as much of the Magaambya seems to be these days). No one has gone into the library in many years, and he doesn't know the state of the stacks therein.

This task begins when Takulu asks the heroes to come to his office at a convenient time for them. The heroes can find his office, like Koride's, in the Heron Archives. Read or paraphrase the following.

"I have a favor to ask of you." Teacher Ot looks up from the many books arranged around him with a furrow in his brow. "Some research materials I need are missing from the usual reference libraries. I've had initiates look for them with no success, and I've spoken with the other professors to see if perhaps what I need has landed in their more private collections. Again, no success. I now know where they aren't, which tells me where they must be." He pulls out a detailed map of the Magaambya's grounds. "This building here–" he places a lens from his desk over what appears to be a round dormitory, magnifying it, "–hasn't seen use in..." He trails off and shrugs before continuing.

"It was carved from an enormous stump as a dormitory but was being converted into a library before the project was abandoned. Please see if these five books are there." Teacher Ot provides a short list. "Return them to me regardless of their condition. I would appreciate anything else you feel would be relevant or worth salvaging."

Takulu doesn't know why the library conversion was abandoned; in fact, no one still on campus does. Takulu seeks the following five works.

- *Studies on the Habits and Migration Patterns of Birds and Drakes of the Continent of Garund*, recorded in a leather-bound book.
- *An Expanded History of the Lesser-Known Peoples of the Mwangi Expanse*, recorded on vellum and bound by leather cords.
- *The Worlds Between Worlds: Exploring the Planes and Demi-Planes, Volume 4*, recorded in an extraordinarily large leather-bound book.
- *Treatise on the Various Communicative Methods of Non-Vocally-Projecting Entities*, recorded on a scroll that whispers eerily when unrolled.

TAKE A BREAK

Every school year needs a few breaks in the monotony of constant classes, and the Magaambya is no exception. The regional and religious differences of those who attend, teach, and reside at the school mean that almost any day could be a holiday for someone. Emphasizing these holidays helps remind your players that time is passing.

The teachers make sure to observe holidays that are important to the students and staff. Also, as in any other school, some days simply become impromptu holidays to celebrate the small victories and accomplishments of friends. For instance, Chizire makes note of any birthdays he learns, as it's a good time to sell–and imbibe–the output from his still. Esi hosts small and quiet "parties" that are more like laid-back afternoons of mutual decompression after particularly difficult exams.

For a festival like Longnight, which occurs on a full moon in the winter, classes end earlier than normal and start late the next day to allow revelers time to recover. For longer festivals, like the weeks-long Burning Blades festival in the summer, classes are only canceled for the final day of the celebration. Days celebrating independence or harvest festivals might involve sharing culturally significant foods, and it isn't uncommon for students to work together to bring small feasts to share with a class.

- *Collected Field Notes of the Druid Mata Digemari*, a small chest with cramped writing covering its wooden surfaces.

Takulu also seeks any other texts that seem interesting, regardless of their condition; he's no stranger to both magical and mundane restoration efforts, so he doesn't mind if the texts are damaged.

The abandoned dormitory-turned-library is in an overgrown section of the campus grounds. When the heroes arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

Wrapped in overgrowth, the stump of an enormous tree squats on the Magaambya grounds. Its upper surface features several lightning scars, though it's unclear whether these strikes killed the tree or occurred later. Windows, just visible beneath the concealing vines, are covered with thick films of dust on the inside. The vegetation around the door has recently been hacked away, providing an easy entry. A chain of silver bells lies discarded on the front step.

Takulu didn't mention the open door, so the heroes might be suspicious. A close look reveals that the vines were all pulled apart, not cut, and some bear strange ink stains. A garland of tiny silver bells lies near the front step, as though torn away from the entrance. This chain of bells once hung by the door, but the gremlins that now infest the library quickly tossed it aside out of superstitious fear.

Treasure: The garland of silver bells is worth 10 gp.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for each book they return to Takulu, to a maximum of 120 XP (because one book he wants is completely destroyed).

Features of the Tree-Stump Library

Most of the library is a mess of sagging shelves, old beds, and torn books. The library interior is unlit, though just enough light comes in through the dusty, vine-shrouded windows to provide dim light throughout. The doors are all lightweight wood and open easily with a push; the latches they once held have all been removed as part of the renovation.

B1. Main Room — Moderate 2

A quick glance around shows that the circular room has been packed with shelves in every space that could

viably fit one, and a few where it can't. Books are wedged in sideways or simply thrown on the floor, their pages smeared into illegibility. Seven closed doors lead to other rooms. Surprisingly, little dust sits on the floor or shelves.

The shelves are 8 feet tall, and the ceiling is 10 feet high, leaving just enough space for the creatures in this room to move around on the shelves. A hero can topple these badly balanced shelves with a successful DC 13 Athletics check.

None of Takulu's books are here, but confirming their absence takes a few hours of searching.

Creatures: Four ink-stained gremlins called scrits doze atop the shelves, lazy after smearing and then eating so many books. They're hard to spot up there, particularly as they hide if they hear any evidence of intruders. They try to remain atop the shelves and out of reach while they cast *grease* to trip up the heroes, then jump down to jab with their inky fingers. They prefer to gang up on the least-armored intruders. Most bells don't bother them, but they've somehow come to believe that only silver bells are truly dangerous; the scrits take a –2 circumstance penalty to attack anyone openly carrying silver bells, as their caution impedes their aggression.

If two scrits are defeated, the others flee to area **B7**, hoping that the wasps there will aid them (but the insects don't).

SCRITS (4) CREATURE 0

Page 82

Initiative Stealth +7

Items two scrits each wear a matching *bracer of missile deflection* (neither of them can activate it)

Inquisitive Insects: If the heroes spend more than 10 minutes poking through the books here, the silverfish in areas **B3** and **B5** hear them and come rushing out.

Treasure: Anyone searching the books finds a *scroll of negate aroma* and a *scroll of faerie fire*.

B2. Organization Station

This room seems to have served as a staging area for someone's attempts to organize the collection. Several books sit open on one desk with notes next to them, atop scrolls with long lists. The other two desks precariously hold up several stacks of books and closed boxes. More boxes overflowing with books sit on the floor nearby, as if still waiting to be sorted.

When the makeshift library was being transported to this location, someone attempted the immeasurable task of chronicling, filing, and organizing each and every item into an inventory. Unfortunately, they only seemed to make it about a quarter of the way through. Of Takulu's books, the only one listed on the inventory is *The Worlds Between Worlds*. A hero reading the inventory notes that five of its six volumes have been relocated to a southeast room (area **B4**).

Takulu's Book: A hero who succeeds at a DC 12 Perception check notices that one of the boxes stuffed with books is a chest with carved writings all over it, which is the *Collected Field Notes of the Druid Mata Digemari*. Ironically, the only one of Takulu's books here isn't on the inventory list.

Treasure: A gold key resting on the scrolls is worth 35 gp—it doesn't unlock anything here.

B3. Dubious Research Trivial 2

This moist room has heaps of partially-chewed books and scattered papers, many of which have been pulped and mashed into strange, nest-like shapes. A crack in the wooden wall drips with moisture and is covered with a profusion of mold.

The books here are all compiled from the same research topic: potential positive uses for spells considered evil by the world at large. It seems someone was building to a thesis by studying these texts but left off the research a long time ago. As many of the books have gruesome subject matters (detailing evil spells and their effects in vivid detail), it's perhaps best that the insects lairing here destroyed so many of them.

Creatures: The moisture and books have drawn a silverfish swarm and a giant silverfish. They aggressively attack anyone they detect in the library other than the scrits. Their clacking as they fight is loud enough to alert the silverfish in area **B5**. Those silverfish rush out to join the fight; together, all the silverfish make up a moderate encounter.

SILVERFISH SWARM CREATURE –1

Page 84

Initiative Perception +5

GIANT SILVERFISH CREATURE 0

Page 84

Initiative Perception +8

Treasure: The research notes here contain a limited version of the *create undead* ritual, useful for creating zombies of 2nd level or lower. If the heroes give these notes to Takulu, he pays them 50 gp and gives the slightest look of disgust upon reviewing its contents.

B4. Bed Storage

This room is jammed with simple beds and frames. They're precariously stacked, as if arranged to simply keep them out of the way. Dusty boxes are shoved beneath them.

Handling the stacked beds is dangerous. Unless the hero moving them succeeds at a DC 16 Thievery check, the beds tumble and deal 2d6 bludgeoning damage to everyone in the room (DC 16 basic Reflex save).

Takulu's Book: The boxes are easy to reach and contain—among other various works—Volumes 1, 3, 5, and 6 of *Worlds Between Worlds*. Volume 2 is long lost. Volume 4 is stashed beneath a blanket on one of the bottom beds. The heroes must unstack the beds then succeed at a DC 16 Perception check to find it.

Treasure: A *bracelet of dashing* is behind the boxes under the bed; anyone searching the boxes spots it.

B5. Miscellaneous Storage Trivial 2

Heaps of dormitory furniture have been pushed into this room, including several frayed wicker chairs, a jumble of coatracks, and two broken beds. The room is unpleasantly moist, and thin sheets of mold cover the chairs and bed.

This room's contents seem to have been shoved around without much thought, the sure sign of a task completed rapidly, not properly. Ink-stained blankets cover the moldy, broken beds the scrits sleep in.

Creatures: Two giant silverfish nest beneath the beds. They scuttle out if they detect intruders other than the scrits. If the heroes haven't yet encountered the silverfish in area **B3**, those silverfish join the fight here, scuttling quickly across the main room. Together, the silverfish make up a moderate encounter.

GIANT SILVERFISH (2) CREATURE 0

Page 84

Initiative Perception +8

B6. The Reading Nook Low 3

While many broken stools and chairs lie scattered in the corner of this room, there's also a comfortable armchair with piles of books arrayed around it. Someone might have used this armchair as a reading nook, though long enough ago that dust has accumulated over the books and chair.

This room has been carefully arranged into a comfortable reading spot. Shortly after the library was abandoned, a student crept inside, found the collected lore too enticing to resist, and made this area her personal reading nook. She graduated many years ago, but the evidence of her special hideaway remains.

Creatures: Three spellskeins are trapped in this room. They know that the silverfish nearby love to eat scraps of cloth and paper like them, so they remain here out of fright. When the heroes first enter this room, the spellskeins hide and hope the heroes go away. If they start perusing the books, the spellskeins fold themselves into crane shapes and flutter around the room to get the heroes' attention. They don't intend to attack, although they defend themselves if the heroes initiate violence.

The spellskeins want a safe way out of the library. If they need to explain their agitation, one of the spellskeins folds itself into a reasonable approximation of a darting silverfish while the others mimic being afraid of it. If the heroes show these spellskeins a safe way out, they immediately take it.

The heroes decide whether to let the spellskeins simply disperse into the campus or elsewhere in Nantambu; the heroes might even find a new home for them someplace else.

SPELLSKEINS (3) CREATURE 0

Page 85

Initiative Stealth +7

Takulu's Books: The piles here contain several books relating to the ruined city of Bloodsalt, whose long-vanished inhabitants supposedly sprouted wings and flew away. Also among the scattered stacks are ancillary works on Mwangi residents and dragons, bookmarked for useful cross-referencing. Both *Studies on the Habits and Migration Patterns of Birds and Drakes of the Continent of Garund* and *An Expanded History of the Lesser-Known Peoples of the Mwangi Expanse* are here. A slim folio contains a partial map of the ruined city; though this cartography might not seem of much interest now, note whether the heroes take it (whether to keep or to give to Takulu), as it proves helpful in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #171: Hurricane's Howl*.

Treasure: The long-gone student left her *animal staff* behind the overstuffed chair. The folio containing the map also has a narrow *scroll of fleet step* used as a bookmark.

XP Award: If the heroes help the spellskeins out of the library, award them 80 XP.

B7. Ceaseless Buzzing

A faint buzzing echoes in this mostly empty room. Two laden shelves are crammed into the entrance, and a mass of matted paper hangs from the ceiling against the wall opposite the door.

A swarm of wasps has been working on this nest for some time, which accounts for its size, but the swarm isn't large or aggressive enough yet to pose a threat. The scrits don't realize that the wasps won't fight for them, however, so they retreat here in the misplaced hopes the wasps will protect them.

Takulu's Ruined Book: Careful examination of the nest reveals that some of the paper used in its construction moans softly. These remnants once belonged to a scroll called *A Treatise on the Various Communicative Methods of Non-Vocally-Projecting Entities*. The scroll's title is the only piece that's still legible; the scrits have smeared the rest into illegibility and then tore it apart, providing material for the wasp nest. It can't be recovered, even by Takulu's skills at book restoration.

B8. Library Supplies

Aside from a handful of books and journals in boxes on the floor, this room is empty.

The boxes contains extra supplies, such as blank journals, quills, charcoal, and writing implements. Although the heroes can easily replenish their academic materials here, they aren't of much value.

MONOCHROME MURMURS

There are those who might call Teacher **Zuma** (CN male half-orc conspiracy theorist) eccentric. He would, most likely, correct them with a deeply—if questionably—referenced rant about the need for alternative methods of information gathering and dissemination within the current political and magical climate. The teacher's intellect is sharp, and his mastery of defensive magic is superb. Zuma's ability to distinguish strands of truth (though perhaps, at times, picking up "truths" where none exist) qualified him early on for the Emerald Boughs, and he's now one of that branch's most colorful members. Zuma's classes range from details of eminently useful rituals to utterly nonsensical ramblings, often within the space of only a few minutes. He's well liked, although few students (or teachers) have the mental fortitude to interact with him for long. Tzeniwe, normally gracious and caring with everyone, has little patience for Zuma because she sees "when a web of thoughts is poorly shaped from insufficient foundations."

Zuma is currently testing a process to share magical abilities. He needs a group of willing volunteers who aren't too far along in their magical studies to help him test a special tattoo ink, and the new initiates fit his requirements perfectly. Zuma asks any hero who's a member of the Emerald Boughs to bring their friends by his office when convenient; if there are none, he gets the word to them through Ignaci.

Zuma has one of the few offices in the Elephant Museum. He insisted on an office here, among the Uzunjati teachers, because of powerful but undetectable defenses he believes Jatembe imbued into the building named after his greatest chronicler. When the heroes arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

"Ah, are you the new volunteers being sent to me?" Teacher Zuma gives an eager grin and rubs his hands together. "Volunteerism is a sign of..." The half-orc seems poised to launch into a rambling rant, but he shakes his head and returns to the subject at hand. "No need for you to be nervous about this little process, this shouldn't hurt anyone too much. At least not if I carried the five in the formula, ah?" He guffaws as he opens a door from the sprawling mess of his office to an even-more-chaotic laboratory behind it. A bright-green liquid burbles in a flask and travels through a dizzying network of spiraling tubes until it becomes something dark and swirling in a much smaller bottle. Pinned to the wall are several scraps of paper, each bearing a separate piece of an impossibly complex alchemical formula.

"Your role here is simple: just sit still and focus while I attempt to prove my theorem that it is possible to entangle

and connect the magically inclined essences of multiple persons in such a way that they may, in fact, be able to affect each other's dependent natures and cause independent changes on those who are part of the created system of magically inclined individuals. Perfectly logical and natural, of course, when you think about it."

Zuma

Zuma has already completed most of his preparations; he has followed his formula and produced a bottle of special tattoo ink. When applied to skin, the ink is supposed to permit the heroes' inherent magic to "talk between them," amplifying individual effects. However, the ink doesn't quite work as intended. Although his ritual indeed magically connects the heroes, it only allows them to share words, not magic.

Zuma performs the following ritual as the primary caster. The heroes are all secondary casters, and Zuma insists on their participation whether or not they're trained in Arcana or Occultism. The heroes can pick the tattoo's shape, but it must be the same on all of them and must include a mouth, if only a small one.

Tattoo Ritual: Zuma's ritual, in its current form, is as follows.

TATTOO WHISPERS RITUAL 3

RARE AUDITORY DIVINATION LINGUISTIC MENTAL

Cast 1 hour; **Cost** tattoo inks and silver tattooing needles worth 20 gp for each secondary caster; **Secondary Casters** 2, up to a maximum of 6

Primary Check Crafting (expert); **Secondary Checks** Arcana, Occultism

Range touch; **Targets** the secondary casters

You carefully tattoo the same design upon each secondary caster. The tattoo can be of any shape or symbol, but it must include a mouth. The tattoo fades naturally over the course of 1 month.

Critical Success The tattoos on the secondary casters are all magically linked for 1 week, providing a semi-telepathic bond. Each secondary caster can communicate secretly with any other secondary casters at any time by mouthing words but making no sound. The person receiving a message must be within 120 feet of the sender, must be within the sender's line of sight, and must have their tattoo uncovered. The mouth of the tattoo moves to match the words, which the tattoo whispers, but only the tattoo's bearer can hear it.

Success As critical success, but the effect lasts for 1 day.

Failure The ritual has no effect.

Critical Failure The ritual has no effect and creates a backlash of persistent mental static. All casters are stupefied 1 for 1 day.

To enact the ritual, the heroes must first attempt their DC 22 checks as secondary casters, which affects Zuma's primary check as described on page 408 of the *Core Rulebook*. Zuma then attempts the primary check (DC 27 Crafting). You can roll his Crafting check with a +20 modifier, or you can simply assume his total is 30.

Testing the Effects: Zuma asks the heroes to try to cast one of their spells at the highest level they can. When this casting proves to be no higher a level than they can normally cast, he scribbles several notes and asks the heroes to try casting a spell they've seen another hero cast but which they can't cast themselves. When none of the heroes can cast in this way, he anxiously scribbles more notes. Finally, he asks the heroes to try to communicate with each other silently. If the ritual succeeded, they can do so, as described in the ritual. In any case, Zuma has some good notes about how he can improve his ink formula. He thanks the heroes for their time and dismisses them so he can get back to work.

Treasure: Zuma gives a cheap-looking costume hat to the hero who seemed most interested in his ritual. He assures them that this *hat of the magi* will protect them from "unwanted mental influences." While the hat might look ridiculous, it really is magic, but has no more power than an ordinary *hat of the magi*.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for participating in Zuma's ritual. If the ritual succeeds, increase this amount to 80 XP.

THE STARDAY TOURNAMENT

One of the most famous teachers currently on campus is **Mafika Ayuwari** (NG male human martial artist), a young Tempest Sun-Mage teacher who believes everyone must be prepared for a physical fight, no matter how great their magical prowess. He recently returned from Tian Xia, where his team fought in the fabled Ruby Phoenix Tournament. They didn't win but did well enough to earn international acclaim and no small amount of celebrity on campus.

Mafika aims to build fighting skills with monthly tournaments on campus. For the first tournament since his return, he has obtained the aid of the campus's leshys

to grow tough constructs of living wood to "ride" into fights. This tournament is intended for initiates and attendants; conversants and more senior members of the Magaambya aren't permitted to participate this month. Notices like **Handout: Fight Announcement** (right) are posted in the heroes' dormitory prior to the Starday tournament.

Any hero asking about the tournament learns about Teacher Ayuwari's reputation. Each tournament is slightly different, though this one is the first to be held at the Leshy Gardens in a long time. Haibram, in particular, can't stop talking about it.

When the party arrives at the sparring arena, whether they plan to participate or not, a crowd has started building in anticipation.

A throng of students crowds around the edge of the cleared sparring space near the Leshy Gardens. Chizire waves from an open spot near the front. "You haven't been to one of these yet, have you? Fft, you're in for quite the treat." He flashes a bright grin.

A tall young woman wearing the simple wooden mask of an attendant waits in the middle of the clearing, staff at the ready. A loud rustle blows through the surrounding trees. Stepping out from behind the hedge is a 10-foot-tall construct made of branches woven into a humanoid frame. It holds a wooden sparring sword in one hand and a large wooden shield in the other. Within the construct, plainly in control, a smiling leaf leshy gives a brief wave. The construct bows to the attendant and adopts a defensive stance.

"Signing up is easy," Chizire purrs helpfully. "It can be quite fun, really. You just need to step forward." Within the sparring ground, the attendant has already been knocked flat on her back, looking up in surprise and fear at the wooden blade aimed down at her throat. The construct sheathes the sword with a flourish and offers a hand up. From the hedge erupts a chorus of cheers from several leshys relaxing amid the leaves. Teacher Ayuwari chuckles and calls the name of the next combatant.

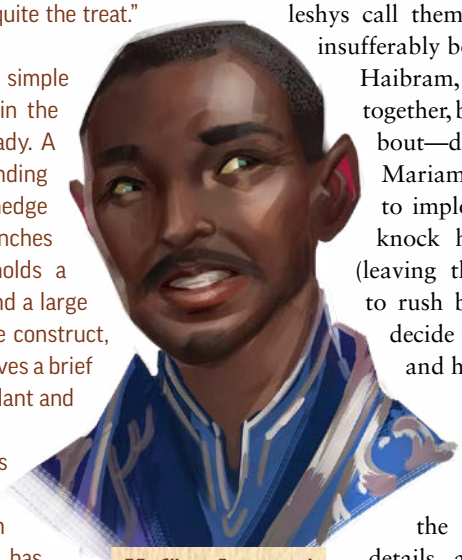
The tournament consists of three bouts against leshy-piloted constructs, each bout more difficult than the last. A group of up to 6 participants can enter as a team, but only a maximum of 2 people can participate in each bout (thus, a team of 6 need not have anyone fight more than once and can still have 2 people in each bout). There's no prohibition against fighting multiple times, so a team of one can enter but would have to individually handle all three bouts in a row.

Monthly Sparring Tournament this Starday at the Leshy Gardens
Initiates and Attendants Only—All Skill Levels Welcome
Single Elimination Brackets, Winner Receives Prize
Attendance Strongly Encouraged!

HANDOUT: FIGHT ANNOUNCEMENT

A team who wins all three bouts is that month's victor; the team that does so with the least injuries wins if there is a tie. If no one wins the final bout, Mafika declares that there's no formal winner, but the leshys call themselves the victors and become insufferably boastful for months.

Haibram, Esi, and Mariama form a team together, but they don't last past the second bout—due to a spot of poor luck, one of Mariama's strikes causes the construct to implode in a burst of branches that knock her and Haibram unconscious (leaving the startled and exposed leshy to rush back into the bushes). You can decide whether other teams participate and how well they fare.


Mafika Ayuwari

Gaining the Upper Hand

The heroes might seek ways to improve their chances in the tournament or just get more details about what they'll face. The easiest place to accomplish either option is over by the leshy-occupied bush at the edge of the Leshy Gardens. While the leshys can't be bribed or coerced into doing any less than their best in a fight, they love to gossip about each other and their constructs. Keeping the flighty leshys on track, however, can sometimes prove difficult. For example, some might be more interested in explaining their deep understanding of weather patterns or learning the latest updates in primal magic theory. If a hero talking with the leshys succeeds at a DC 16 Diplomacy check, the leshys remain sufficiently on task to give specific details about the number and type of constructs used in each bout, along with their relative power levels. The leshys also identify the weaknesses to critical hits and fire that all their constructs have.

The heroes can watch other bouts to learn more. On a successful DC 16 Perception check, a hero identifies the constructs' weaknesses to critical hits and fire.

While Mafika tolerates (and, in fact, encourages) team members to work together within the limits of the tournament rules, he has a well-known distaste for poor sportsmanship. Nevertheless, if the heroes want to engage in any trickery or subterfuge, decide on an appropriate skill and use a DC of 16. For example, a successful DC 16 Deception check can cause a distraction between bouts to allow enough time for one team member to use Treat Wounds on another.

FIGHTING IN THE TOURNAMENT

If the heroes step forward to fight, either as one team or multiple teams, the foes they must face in each bout are listed below. Each bout continues until one side yields. The students are expected to attack the constructs, not the leshy pilots inside. Direct attacks against the leaf leshy pilots result in automatic disqualification, but sometimes, damage to a leshy might be unavoidable, as with an area spell or splash damage from a bomb (a leshy in a construct has greater cover).

Mafika allows a maximum of 5 minutes between each bout, which provides enough time for healing spells but not enough to Treat Wounds. Students joining the next fight might have to start with injuries from the prior bout. The leshys fully heal their constructs during this time, except for the effects of the constructs' Critical Vulnerability. Teammates who aren't fighting in a bout can't enter the sparring area or affect the constructs, but any spells they can cast to affect their participating teammates from 30 feet away are acceptable. If a student is unconscious with no one to help, Mafika stabilizes them.

BOUT 1 — TRIVIAL 2

In the first bout of the tournament, the participating heroes face a single shieldbearer construct. This is a Trivial encounter for a party at full strength, but since at most two heroes fight at once, the combat presents a greater challenge.

Creatures: The leshy piloting the construct is a show-off. They intentionally miss with Attacks of Opportunity, instead swinging the sword in a showy display that draws cheers from the spectators. The leshy yields when they, or their construct, are reduced to 6 Hit Points or fewer.

SHIELDBEARER CONSTRUCT — CREATURE 2

RARE N LARGE CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Perception +6; low-light vision

Skills Athletics +8

Str +4, **Dex** +1, **Con** +3, **Int** –5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** –5

Items wooden shield (Hardness 3, HP 12, BT 6), wooden sword

AC 17; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

HP 30; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** fire 3

Critical Vulnerability A critical hit damages the construct's controls, making it clumsy 1 until repaired. Additional critical hits increase this value, up to clumsy 4.

Ridden Construct The construct is piloted by a leaf leshy (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 218), who can be targeted separately but has greater cover. The leshy can't take actions of their own while inside the construct, other than to leave it, which takes 1 minute.

Attack of Opportunity ↷

Shield Block ↷

Speed 20 feet

Melee ❖ wooden sword +11 (versatile P), **Damage** 1d8+4 slashing

BOUT 2 — LOW 2

The second bout is against a shieldbearer construct and a smaller sicklehand construct that has a leaner build and curved wooden blades for hands.

Creatures: Unlike the shieldbearer in the first bout, this construct makes Attacks of Opportunity when it can. The sicklehand stays mobile and attempts to trip its foes. If the sicklehand successfully trips a hero, the leshy inside recommends that the hero yield; if the hero doesn't comply, it presses its attack. A leshy yields when they, or their construct, are reduced to 6 Hit Points or fewer.

SHIELDBEARER CONSTRUCT — CREATURE 2

Page 40

Initiative Perception +6

SICKLEHAND CONSTRUCT — CREATURE 0

RARE N MEDIUM CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Perception +6; low-light vision

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +5 (+6 to Trip)

Str +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** –5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** –5

Items wooden sickles (2)

AC 16; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4

HP 15; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** fire 3

Critical Vulnerability As shieldbearer construct (page 40).

Ridden Construct As shieldbearer construct (page 40).

Speed 25 feet

Melee ❖ wooden sickle +8 (agile, finesse, trip), **Damage** 1d4+1 slashing

Menacing Sickles The construct deals an additional 1d4 precision damage to flat-footed or prone creatures.

BOUT 3 — SEVERE 2

In the final bout, the participating heroes must fight the most powerful of the leshy constructs: a towering bramble champion. Three sicklehand constructs fight alongside the bramble champion.

Creatures: The bramble champion carries a large wooden maul made of soft wood, so the bludgeoning damage it deals is nonlethal. The sicklehand constructs work together to flank foes whenever possible to increase their damage and generally harry anyone avoiding melee with the bramble champion. A leshy yields when they, or their construct, are reduced to 6 Hit Points or fewer.

BRAMBLE CHAMPION CONSTRUCT — CREATURE 3

RARE N LARGE CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Perception +10; low-light vision

Skills Athletics +9 (+10 to Shove)

Sicklehand Construct

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** –5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** –5
Items wooden maul

AC 20; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8
HP 45; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** fire 3
Critical Vulnerability As shieldbearer construct (page 40).
Ridden Construct As shieldbearer construct (page 40).
Hammer Block ↷ **Trigger** An ally within the bramble champion's reach is targeted by an attack, and the bramble champion can see the attacker; **Effect** The bramble champion interposes with its hammer, giving the ally a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Speed 20 feet
Melee ❖ wooden maul +12 (nonlethal, reach 10 feet, shove), **Damage** 1d12+4 bludgeoning

Bramble Champion Construct

SICKLEHAND CONSTRUCTS (3) CREATURE 0

Page 41
Initiative Perception +6

Treasure: The award for victory in the tournament is an *onyx dog wondrous figurine*.

XP Award: Award the heroes 80 XP for victory in the first bout, 120 XP for victory in the second bout, and 180 XP for victory in the final bout. This award goes to all heroes, regardless of the number who participated in the fighting or even if they participated on multiple teams.

Extracurricular Activities

The instructors aren't the only ones in need of aid; fellow students also need an occasional helping hand. The following favors are entirely optional and can serve as ways for heroes to deepen their friendships with their peers. Most encounters listed below only require one or two skill checks, but feel free to expand these into longer roleplaying encounters or introduce greater challenges.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP for each favor they successfully provide.

CRICKET THEFT

Chizire has an idea for a new brew, but he needs a special ingredient: rare and magical crickets taken from Koride's office insect collection. To get into the office unseen, a hero must succeed at a DC 15 Stealth check (or, alternatively, a DC 15 Deception check to Impersonate someone who comes and goes from the Heron Archives regularly). A hero can open the tricky latch on the crickets' terrarium with a successful DC 15 Thievery check to Pick a Lock. On a failure at either of these checks, Koride catches the heroes in the act. She has little punishment beyond stern words, as she's busy and doesn't want the distraction of submitting a formal disciplinary complaint, but she magically protects her office so the heroes can't try again.

Treasure: If the heroes bring Chizire the crickets, he whips up his batch of brew. It's a dismal failure from a flavor perspective, but he's able to distill out a stomach-curdling *potion of leaping*. Anyone who

drinks the potion is sickened 1 and can't recover from the sickened condition while the potion is in effect. He gives it to the heroes with a wry thanks.

LOFTY LEAP

Haibram has built a new, compact hang glider, and he needs to get as much height as he can to try it out. He knows the Soaring Spire permits impossible leaps from the ground, but he has a plan to go even higher. He asks one of the heroes to leap to the peak of the Soaring Spire and balance there with their fingers interlocked. Haibram will leap into the hero's hands and then propel himself up another 60 feet, taking him more than 100 feet from the ground. The hero providing aid must succeed at a DC 15 Acrobatics check to Balance atop the spire followed by a DC 15 Athletics check to hurl Haibram as high as possible. If the hero succeeds at both checks, he considers his hang glider a success, and he insists he owes it all to the hero who helped him.

LOST CHICKEN

Anchor Root's chicken familiar has escaped from the dormitory and Anchor Root can't find it. She's too wracked with self-recrimination to provide much help while searching, but the heroes aid her by looking around. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check finds the chicken—it wandered too close to the Soaring Spire just outside the dormitory and now frantically runs back and forth on the dormitory roof. With a successful DC 15 Athletics check, a hero catches the darting bird to safely bring it down. Anchor Root squeaks a quick and high-pitched thanks before hastily returning to her room.

RULES MASTERY

Okoro has managed to get his hands on a new board game, one with incredibly dense and complex rules. He has excitedly requested a few people to play with him to test it ahead of the biweekly game night. To understand the rules, a hero must succeed at a DC 14 Occultism or Society check to Decipher Writing. On a critical success, the hero realizes that the rules reference page is a cipher concealing a *scroll of augury*.

Any player who succeeds at a DC 18 Occultism or Society check to Recall Knowledge wins the game (there can be multiple winners), but heroes who didn't succeed at the check to understand the rules must decrease the degree of success of their Society or Occultism check to play the game by one step.

Treasure: Okoro is impressed with any hero that finds the scroll hidden in the instructions. He lets them keep that page.

SURPRISE!

Zachva and Zanvi corner the heroes to ask for help in preparing a surprise birthday party for their mother, Tzeniwe. While they leave the particulars to the heroes, they hover incessantly during the planning and decorating process. Their constant bickering and their distracting "help" threaten to derail the party. The heroes can either ask Esi or Noxolo to keep the twins out of trouble (which requires a PC to succeed at a DC 13 Diplomacy check to convince either of them), or a hero who succeeds at a DC 17 Deception check can distract the twins and keep them out of the way.

So long as the heroes can plan, the birthday party is a success, much to Tzeniwe's delight. She's particularly grateful to the heroes for working so hard behind the scenes. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check to Sense Motive realizes she wasn't actually surprised but pretends her best to please her children.

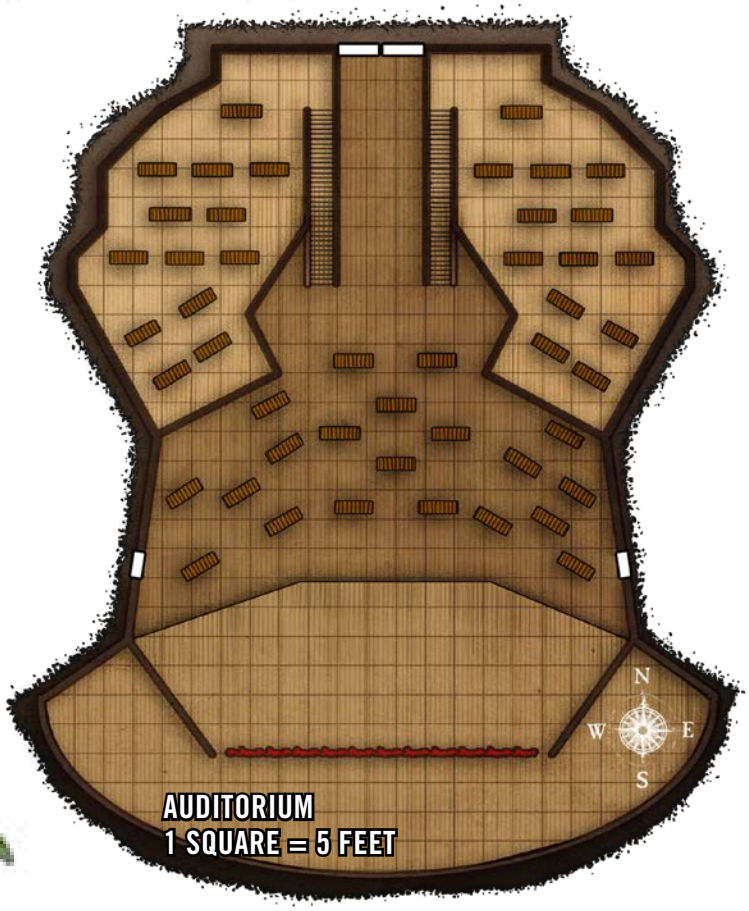
The First Masking

To advance to the rank of attendants, initiates must craft a mask during their First Masking ceremony. This ceremony involves genuine and often lengthy work, as the students each craft a mask under the eye (and sometimes the aid) of their teachers. There's one blank mask present for each initiate going through the ceremony. Although made of plain wood with simple eye slits, the masks have magical transformative potential. Containers of cloth, beads, feathers, and metals are all nearby, and incorporating these materials along with shaping the wood allows an initiate to focus their experiences and aspirations into the mask's final form, magically shaping it beyond what mere craftsmanship can produce.

The heroes aren't the only ones attending the First Masking. Every initiate from the Spire Dormitory is making their first mask, and several teachers will be present to guide their work. The upcoming ceremony is all the NPC initiates can talk about, so the heroes certainly know of the upcoming event. They should have plenty of time to consider what shape and type of mask they want to make. Animals are the most typical shapes for Magaambyan masks, but other shapes (particularly celestial objects or supernatural beasts) aren't uncommon.

You might set aside some time between play sessions or during a play session for the players to discuss what masks their characters want to create, as this decision is important for any initiate. They'll be known according to the appearance of their mask for the rest of their career at the Magaambya.

The day of the First Masking is an exciting one for all the initiates in the Spire Dormitory. They prepare



their finest attire, aware that the ceremony starts off somber before turning joyous only once they've all completed their masks.

TIRELESS HALL

The ceremony takes place in Tireless Hall, the building named for Golden Snake, a serpent-person also known as the Tireless Guide. Tireless Hall is often the site of lengthy rituals or ceremonies, as popular rumor holds that participants are less likely to become exhausted while within its walls. Teachers whose classes are reputed to be dull sometimes arrange to hold lectures in Tireless Hall, hoping to make their students less inclined to sleep through class.

Tireless Hall's principal auditorium is the site of the First Masking ceremony. This large, wood-paneled auditorium can seat more than a hundred people. It's located on the building's ground floor, with its southern end below ground to accommodate the ranks of benches that ascend to the north. To provide even more seating, a wide balcony overlooks the auditorium, above the lower rows of benches.

The map of the auditorium appears above.

THE CEREMONY SEVERE 2

In addition to teachers the heroes have met (Takulu, Koride, Zuma, and Mafika) and the Spire Dormitory initiates, the auditorium holds many friends, family members, and other well-wishers. You might even ask the players who among their characters' family and friends might attend this important occasion. Once everyone has assembled, Takulu Ot begins the ceremony with a short speech about what the students are there to do.

"Today you will make your first true mask. Each student's mask is an embodiment of their learning and a reminder of the idea that, over time, people gain other names and faces. Although a mask is worn over the face, it is a reflection of who a person is underneath as well as a visualization of who the person hopes to become. The person beneath a mask has flaws, as all people do, but they also have hopes, dreams, and memories that define them.

"We shall work together to make your first true mask, the expression of your spirit face within. What you do with this mask is up to you. Some wear it proudly and at every opportunity, a sign of who they have become, with their souls writ plain upon their faces. Others choose to keep their mask secret and safe, cherished and shown only to those they trust most in life. Many find somewhere to fall in between.

"The ceremony itself will be conducted in several parts. First, the initiates will come forward with their cohort and will begin, with the teachers, the rituals necessary to mold and create one of these plain masks. The task is an artistic one, of course, for painting a mask or adorning it with beads or feathers is an artistic task, but your hands will be guided by your spirit—its final shape is what you will it to be.

"You will then hold your mask, meditating upon its meaning, as the rest of your cohort completes their masks. Your mask may change shape in your hands as you meditate; this is not unexpected, and it means your mask is attuning itself to you.

"Then, at my signal, all in your cohort will don your masks as one. You see the urn there—it is a receptacle for your beads, if you wish. You need not wear them any longer, for when you don your mask you cease to be an initiate and become an attendant of the Magaambya.

"Esi Djana, come forward with your cohort."

The NPC initiates go first, by their cohort groups: Anchor Root, Chizire, and Esi are first; then Ignaci, Okoro, and Tzeniwe; then Haibram, Mariama, and Noxolo. Each group takes about half an hour to make their masks and don them before returning to their seats. All the teachers actively help the students shape

their masks, particularly Takulu. However, Koride reserves her aid for those students she likes, including Anchor Root, Chizire, and Haibram.

The heroes then take their turn, magically shaping their masks. No check is required, as the teachers guide the ritual with practiced ease. As the heroes meditate before putting their masks on, anyone who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check hears a strange grinding coming from within the walls around the auditorium. Takulu doesn't hear it, and he proceeds with the ceremony by directing the heroes to put on their masks.

Just as the heroes don their masks, the insects burrowing through the walls attack.

The auditorium walls explode inwards with the weight of several giant beetles scrambling over one other. A flood of bugs follows them, a clicking, chittering, writhing mass that flows into the auditorium and throws the crowd into chaos.

There are more insectile attackers than the heroes could possibly hope to face on their own, but they aren't alone; the other teachers and initiates fight back as well. You don't need to track every participant in the fight. You should just concentrate on the insects that fight the heroes, as provided below.

You can narrate the fighting elsewhere in the auditorium by looking at how well the heroes fare. If the heroes are hard-pressed, the giant insects are doing well. If the heroes start to get their fight under control, the other Magaambyans begin to overcome their foes. You might briefly narrate the action elsewhere, such as Teacher Ayuwari swinging a staff to crack an insect's carapace, Teacher Ot distracting a giant centipede by casting *glitterdust* and ushering several spectators to safety, or Haibram leaping onto a giant bee in mid-flight and grappling it to the ground. Once the heroes have finished their fight, the teachers and other students defeat or repel the last of insects as well.

Creatures: Five big bugs focus their attentions on the heroes, fighting them rather than anyone else in the auditorium. The giant goliath beetle simply lumbers to the closest hero. The giant centipedes scuttle around to fight heroes who hang back. The flash beetles fly over the goliath beetle to flank whomever the big beetle is facing.

The aggressive and determined goliath beetle fights until killed. A giant centipede that takes any damage tries to bite the hero who attacked it, then it flees. A flash beetle that takes any damage uses its Light Flash and flees as well. Fleeing insects retreat into the tunnels or out of the auditorium entrances, whichever is closer.

GIANT GOLIATH BEETLE CREATURE 3

Weak giant stag beetle (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 41)
Initiative Perception +10
Speed 20 feet, fly 20 feet, burrow 10 feet

FLASH BEETLES (2) CREATURE -1

Pathfinder Bestiary 41
Initiative Perception +6

GIANT CENTIPEDES (2) CREATURE -1

Pathfinder Bestiary 61
Initiative Perception +6

After the Battle: Koride examines any insects left behind, observing out loud that these insects don't work together naturally and that they must have been compelled to attack. Mafika and Zuma dart into the tunnels to finish off any fleeing insects.

Takulu insists that the initiates, or rather—he corrects himself with pride—the attendants, should ensure everyone made it to safety outside the auditorium before heading back to their dormitories to rest and recover from their injuries. Takulu assures everyone that the instructors and more experienced students of the Magaambya will conduct a full investigation into the cause and extent of this strange attack.

Giant Goliath Beetle

The Queen of Bees was stern and judicious, always striving to make the best decisions, yet her subjects were dour and sullen. The Young Trickster, a favorite of Grandmother Spider, went to the Queen of Bees with a smile and a plan. But two guards at the gates stopped him.

"What do you want, little troublemaker?" they buzzed, stingers at the ready. "Our Queen has no use for your antics on this or any other day. Begone."

"I am here to give your Queen a great gift," the Trickster insisted. "You would never want to deny your Queen a gift out-of-hand, would you? I could go to the Lord of the Hornets... Please, one of you should ask her first, at least." One guard, head high, went to inform the Queen.

For a long time, the remaining guard and the Young Trickster stood in silence, so the Young Trickster hummed to himself, tapped his many feet, and started to dance. "Stop that," the guard thrummed in annoyance and rushed forward. But the Young Trickster swept him into his dance, dancing and twirling. What fun it was! Soon, the other guard returned.

"What is happening here?" the returning guard demanded, but received no answer. The returning guard tried to intervene but was swept into the dance as well! The Queen's steward, and architect, and handmaidens all came, each joining the dance in turn. Then the Queen herself came, for what had befallen her subjects? By now, the Young Trickster stood aside, watching the bees. The Queen saw their dancing and their delight.

"Young Trickster, you have given my people a new way to communicate. What is your price for this?"

"It is enough to see you join the dance," the Trickster said. So she did.

And that is how bees learned to speak through dance. Then some people learned from watching them, and they made their own dances. And this is why so many dances tell stories.

CHAPTER 3: STONE-CAST SHADOWS

As the dust settles and those injured during the First Masking ceremony recover, the Magaambya's instructors begin the precarious balancing act of investigating the strange activities of the insects on the grounds, calming the students, and making sure the unusual attacks don't extend into the city of Nantambu. The faculty's first order of business is to explore and clear the meandering passages and recently carved tunnels beneath the campus. Relying upon trustworthy students is vital, since quickly exploring as much ground as possible may help prevent another attack.

The greatest priority goes to those tunnels around and beneath Tireless Hall, but a quick investigation of other nearby buildings shows several tunnels in those areas, too. While the faculty focuses their attentions beneath Tireless Hall, assuming they can find the most clues there, they delegate the exploration of other tunnels to less-experienced students, such as the heroes. Koride Ulawa is given the task of assigning duties to the cohorts and getting them into action.

Of course, Koride gives her favorite students what seems like the easiest task, the examination of the tunnels beneath Archhorn Library, far from Tireless Hall. However, those students were intimidated by evidence of giant insects in these tunnels, so Koride indulgently agreed to replace them with a different group: the heroes.

No one realizes the danger the heroes are about to be in. Far too canny to keep his base of operations near Tireless Hall, Stone Ghost guessed that the faculty would, indeed, focus their attentions there. He arranged several looping tunnels, partial collapses, and intriguing (but mundane) runes to hold their attention while he advanced his other plans. His base of operations and his most diligent gremlin minions lie far from Tireless Hall, beneath Archhorn Library—an area the heroes will soon explore.

To give the heroes their task, Takulu and Koride summon the students to the steps ascending to the imposing entrance of Archhorn Library.

Teacher Ot and Teacher Ulawa stand on the wide stone steps. While Teacher Ot carefully reviews a sheaf of papers, Teacher Ulawa looks annoyed, the corner of her mouth in a sneer. "How good of you to finally arrive," she says. "Your little cohort is far from my first choice for something so critical to—"

"Koride, please," Teacher Ot says softly, but firmly, then turns to you. "After your services to the Magaambya during your First Masking, we feel you are ready for an important task. Something is going on underneath Tireless Hall, and indeed beneath more of the Magaambya than we first realized. We are sending groups of students into the tunnels we have discovered in an effort to map them as thoroughly as possible. You will be one of these groups."

CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

After the insect attack at the end of the previous chapter, the teachers and students must all pitch in to explore the maze of passages beneath the school. The heroes are assigned a distant, and presumably safe, set of caverns beneath Archhorn Library, but within these passages, the vengeful oread Stone Ghost and his gremlin minions work to expand the tunnels and prepare more attacks. The heroes can defeat Stone Ghost and learn that he was, in an earlier life, a cruel student expelled from the university. The aftermath of the insect attack and the discoveries beneath Archhorn Library hint at greater dangers. The sudden arrival of new anadi students promises some answers, but the heroes must first defend them against hungry griffons.

CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 3 are as follows.

- *+1 morningstar*
- *+1 striking pick*
- *bloodseeker beak*
- *dancing scarf*
- *lesser healing potion*
- *mask of mercy*
- *rhinoceros mask*
- *scroll of dispel magic*

Teacher Ot points across to Tireless Hall. "There is where the attack occurred. But in the lowest levels of all these buildings," he waves to the buildings around it, including Archhorn Library behind him, "we've found more tunnels. Many lead to old cave networks, now connected together by recent digging. Intentional, directed digging."

Teacher Ulawa picks up the explanation. "I sent some students into the basement here in Archhorn Library, to explore and map the caves. It rapidly became obvious that this would be a more involved task than we originally anticipated. I withdrew that group, and you will be going in; you may even manage to make it back out in one piece." She chuckles grimly. "We'll at least wait and see how you manage before sending in the inevitable help."

Teacher Ot steps aside and gestures to the library building. "The first group's notes should still be in the basement. We can hope that Koride's handpicked students were... comprehensive before learning that their feet might get muddy and then pleading for a different assignment."

Teacher Ulawa shrugs. "Their skills were needed elsewhere, Takulu. It's up to your motley band of novices to pick up where they left off."

Takulu adds, "We'll be making our own explorations beneath Tireless Hall, where we believe the danger is greater, should you need to draw us away for anything. But your task is before you, as ours is before us."

The party's instructions are simple: explore the caves beneath Archhorn Library, map it to the best of their abilities, and handle any threats they can manage. The heroes should then report back to Teacher Ot and Teacher Ulawa, but only when they've completed their task. The teachers shouldn't be disturbed lightly.

While the teachers don't explicitly state it, the heroes should realize that this task is intended to test them. This is an opportunity for the heroes to prove themselves, and they shouldn't squander it.

C. Infested Caverns

Several catacombs and classrooms sprawl beneath Archhorn Library, though the building hasn't been used for its intended purpose for quite some time. Most rooms feature paneling of dry, fragrant wood to keep the cold and moisture at bay. Despite being fairly spacious and uncluttered, some of the subterranean rooms also remained abandoned for years, which made them the ideal place for the misanthropic Stone Ghost to lair. He drew a number of gremlins into his service, including burrowing gnagrif gremlins, and hatched his plots of revenge against the school.

When the *Vesicant Egg* began drawing insects of all kinds to the Magaambya, the gremlins were among the first to realize it, as they possess a kinship with vermin. They told Stone Ghost, and he directed several insects into the chambers underneath Archhorn Library, commanding them with the natural magic he had learned, ironically, while a Magaambyan student. Now, the gremlins share the caverns with enormous insects—predominantly giant mining bees that aid the gnagrifs in expanding the cramped natural chambers according to Stone Ghost's commands.

Stone Ghost expected the attack on the First Masking ceremony to be more successful than it was, and he didn't expect the Magaambya to begin an immediate and comprehensive exploration of the tunnels. He left enough false clues to distract anyone exploring underneath Tireless Hall for some time.

INFESTED CAVERNS FEATURES

The map of Stone Ghost's insect- and gremlin-infested caverns is on the inside back cover of this adventure. The passages indicated are only those navigable by the heroes; narrow, winding passages that only Tiny or smaller creatures can use aren't indicated on the map but let the gremlins move around.

Even these larger caverns are generally cramped. Ceilings in the chambers vary between 6 and 8 feet high. In the connecting passages, the ceilings are only 4 to 5 feet high. Any creature moving through an area where the ceiling is shorter than the creature's height treats the area as difficult terrain.

As most creatures inhabiting these caverns don't need light, the caverns are unlit except where indicated. Since the gremlins sometimes wander with candles or lanterns they've found, light sources the heroes bring don't automatically alert the denizens here.

Droning: The constant drone of the mining bees lairing here echoes throughout the infested caverns. The pervasive hum masks other sounds; creatures in the infested caverns have a +2 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks to avoid being overheard. Once all the mining bees are defeated, the drone stops.

Active Encounters: Although the room descriptions below indicate which creatures are likely there, creatures other than Stone Ghost roam around a lot, so the heroes might encounter them elsewhere in the caverns, at your discretion.

Secret Doors: Stone Ghost has created several secret doors throughout the infested caverns. Each is a thin sheet of stone that rotates on a hidden peg. These secret doors swing closed unless held or spiked open. A hero Searching the area of a secret door discovers it with a successful DC 17 Perception check. The gremlins generally know only those secret doors that lead to the rooms where they sleep, but they quickly offer up this information if interrogated.

C1. STAGING ROOM — LOW 3

The wooden wall panels in this long, low room have been broken apart in four places to reveal narrow passages burrowed into the stone. The railing which spans the walls and the low rail in the middle hint that this room once served as a dance studio. Several desks have been relocated here with a few books and papers; more papers nailed to the wood near each entrance feature hastily sketched maps.

After this disused room was found to hold many recent cavern entrances, the instructors added it to the list of tunnels to be explored and mapped. The desks, notes, and maps are all evidence of the first group that came down here: a cohort of Koride's favorite students who balked at the task when they explored a few tunnels and found a much more expansive cave system than they'd expected. The bees' droning caused them the most concern, and they convinced Koride to reassign them. The students were so quick to leave that they left their work here.

The books and scrolls on the desk are some texts about Archhorn Library; Koride's initial team hoped they might give some information or schematics, but the infested caverns don't appear in these old books and so aren't of any use.

The papers tacked to the walls provide sketches of the passages to areas **C2**, **C3**, and **C4**. The passage between areas **C3** and **C4** appears on one of the maps with a portion of the wall circled with a question mark (this mark indicates a secret door in that connecting passage, which leads to area **C7a**). These papers ought to give the heroes a good start on their own map of the infested caverns.

Creatures: After the heroes have had a chance to take a look around this room, but before they begin to explore any of the passages, an intensifying drone emanates from the passage in the center of the south wall. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature or Survival check identifies it as the buzzing of enormous bees. One round later, two giant mining bees fly out of the passage. The gremlins have treated them so terribly that they've decided to fly off, and finding other creatures in their escape route makes them both angry and aggressive. They attack the heroes immediately. A bee reduced to fewer than 6 Hit Points flees out into Archhorn Library if the heroes haven't shut the door.

GIANT MINING BEES (2) — CREATURE 2

Page 80

Initiative Perception +9

Treasure: The students who set up this room left behind a *scroll of dispel magic* on one of the tables.

Containing the Gremlins: If the heroes suspect gremlins might be present in the caverns, or if they encounter gremlins and retreat here, they might realize that this room makes an excellent place for the *fey abeyance* ritual they learned earlier. Casting the ritual here prevents the gremlins from easily fleeing the caverns and making their way to the surface. When a fleeing gremlin gets to the area of the ritual, they sense the danger, but they don't know what kind and they don't want to risk entering it. Any gremlins that flee this way simply stop, unsure of where to go, as they can sense the detrimental effects the ritual would have on them. They surrender to any heroes they see.

If the heroes don't come up with the idea of using the *fey abeyance* ritual on their own, an NPC they speak with might suggest casting it to more easily take care of the gremlins. By "take care of" them, people like Takulu mean to usher the gremlins off the campus, while teachers like Koride probably mean to just kill them. The heroes could interpret this suggestion as they'd like.

Mundane solutions also exist. For example, the heroes might board over these entrances to keep the gremlins contained, which also works.

XP Award: If the heroes use the *fey abeyance* ritual here or come up with some other way to keep the gremlins from escaping onto the school grounds and continue being pests, award them 30 XP.

Giant Mining Bee

C2. WET HOLLOW

Both of the southwestern tunnels from area **C1** descend steeply into this room, as does the tunnel from area **C3**. The room has several puddles of murky, standing water that the gremlins drink. Some type of crustacean is mostly submerged in one of the puddles; this dead vexgit was the victim of other gremlins' pranks, and most of the creature's head is missing.

Treasure: The dead vexgit wears a silver ring worth 40 gp as a bracelet. The heroes find it automatically if they remove the creature's corpse from the puddle.

C3. MASSIVE MUSHROOM

This large, irregular cavern has moisture dripping down the walls and a narrow tunnel leading up to the north. A large, blue, glowing mushroom faintly illuminates the space.

The large glowing mushroom is a spontaneous manifestation of the Magaambya's primal magic. It has grown here for many years, getting larger and larger; now it's roughly the size and width of a dwarf. The mushroom has plainly been gnawed at a bit, but the gremlins found it unappetizing and leave it alone. A hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Nature check knows that it isn't harmful; on a critical success, the hero realizes that eating it will aid primal spellcasters.

The mushroom bears a strange enchantment that interacts with those capable of casting primal spells. Anyone eating a piece of the mushroom is imbued with restorative magic. For the next hour, when the imbiber casts a non-cantrip primal spell that targets only one creature, they can choose to restore 1d6 Hit Points per spell level to the target in addition to the spell's normal effects; this is a healing effect. A creature can only gain this benefit from the mushroom once per day.

C4. CENTIPEDE TRAPS — MODERATE 3

Three centipede carcasses lie on the floor near the south end of this room. Each appears to be curled around a ball of string or wire, like a kitten with a ball of yarn.

This chamber used to be a centipede nest, but Stone Ghost used all the centipedes in the attack on the auditorium. The three left behind here were killed in the gremlins' fervent whipping to goad the rest of the centipedes to attack. Rather than let the dead bugs go to waste, they scooped out all the centipede meat for food and prepared a trap inside each exoskeleton.

Koride's initial explorers made it as far as this room, but they didn't investigate the dead centipedes, so all three traps are still armed.

Hazard: The gremlins curled each giant centipede carcass around a tight ball of springy wire. The wire is tied to the centipede's legs, which the gremlins have sharpened even further into deadly points. When the carcass is jostled, the wire starts to unspring, pulling out the centipede legs and flinging them around the room. All of the centipede's legs are pulled free from the carcass after 1 minute of unspooling.

There are three centipede traps. When one is triggered, the legs it flings jostle the other two traps, so almost immediately, all three traps are hurling sharpened centipede legs around the room. Multiple traps don't do any more damage to people in the room than just one trap—a character can be hit by only so many sharpened centipede legs each turn—but all three traps need to be disarmed or expended before the room is safe.

CENTIPEDE CARCASSES TRAP — HAZARD 5

COMPLEX MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth +11 (trained)

Description Three giant centipede carcasses have wire springs that pull out and fling their sharpened legs around the room.

Disable DC 23 Nature (trained) to bend the centipede carapace so the wire can't pull out any more legs, or DC 21 Thievery (expert) to cut the springy wires. After all three carcasses are disabled (regardless of the check used), the trap is deactivated. The trap automatically deactivates after 10 rounds.

AC 22; **Fort** +15; **Ref** +9

Carcass Hardness 12; **Carcass HP** 20 (BT 10); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage.

Volley of Legs ↻ **Trigger** A carcass is touched or jostled; **Effect** Each creature within 30 feet of any centipede carcass takes 4d4 piercing damage (DC 22 basic Reflex save), and the area becomes difficult terrain due to the many sharpened legs on the ground. Each creature that Strides more than 10 feet through the area must succeed at a DC 20 Acrobatics check or take 1d4 piercing damage. The trap then rolls initiative.

Routine (1 action) Each creature within 30 feet of a centipede carcass that hasn't been disabled takes 6d4 piercing damage (DC 22 basic Reflex save).

C5. MINING TUNNELS — MODERATE 3

This room has broken carapaces of giant bee drones heaped into its corners and reeks of the sickly-sweet smell of decay. Three recent tunnels lead northeast.

Stone Ghost has commanded the gremlins to dig new tunnels northeast from this area to reach other

sublevels of the Magaambya's buildings. Gnagrifs and mining bees have only begun this work; the tunnels don't yet go anywhere. The work is particularly difficult on mining bees, who are poorly suited to digging through stone, but the gremlins work the bees hard regardless. When a bee dies from its efforts, the gremlins just stack its body on the piles, which are now crawling with tiny carrion insects enjoying the feast.

Creatures: Two gnagrifs gnaw slowly but diligently through the rock, one in each of the longest tunnels. A tired mining bee is in the third tunnel; without a gremlin urging it to work, it just rests and tries to remain out of sight.

These creatures generally ignore any activity in the larger cave; they have a –4 penalty to Perception checks for initiative if surprised. If the bee is bothered, it fights back, and the gremlins rush out to join it in a fight. If either of the gremlins realize there are intruders, they shout, bringing the other gremlin to attack. The bee only joins the fight if attacked or if one of the gremlins takes the time to cast *speak with animals* and demand that it participate.

The tenacious gnagrifs fight to the death, but the bee flees as soon as it takes any damage, buzzing back to area **C9**. The heroes might encounter it alongside the other mining bees there.

GNAGRIFS (2) CREATURE 2

Page 83
Initiative Perception +7

GIANT MINING BEE CREATURE 2

Page 80
Initiative Perception +9

C6. PUDDLES AND MOLD LOW 3

Several wide, shallow puddles cover the floor of this cool, moist cavern. Thick brown fungus covers a natural pillar in the northwest part of this room.

As this room contains two troublesome but stationary dangers, the gremlins move quickly through here on the rare occasions they traverse it. They know not to bring any fire near the pillar.

Hazard: The fungus on the pillar is a patch of brown mold. Anyone approaching the pillar realizes it's the source of the chill in the air since the temperature drops near it.

BROWN MOLD HAZARD 2

Gamemastery Guide 77
Stealth DC 21

Creature: One of the puddles near the cave's south end is actually a gray ooze, which generally waits patiently for prey to step into it before attacking. It's not close enough to the brown mold to take cold damage from it when the mold leeches warmth; if the brown mold expands, the gray ooze nevertheless feels the wave of cold, which prompts it to lurch forth to attack the heroes. The gray ooze fights until destroyed, pursuing prey as well as its Speed permits.

GRAY OOZE CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 193
Initiative Stealth +12

C7. NEST ROOMS VARIABLE 3

All four gremlin nest rooms (areas **C7a**, **C7b**, **C7c**, and **C7d**) are similar.

This filthy room is jammed with hammocks, blankets, and bedrolls, all heaped into makeshift nests for little creatures. Discarded bits of food, twisted lumps of metal, and bits of stone litter the floor.

These nest areas are concealed by secret doors (page 48). Exhausted from their work, gremlins sleep deeply and require loud noise or vigorous shaking to awaken.

Creatures: As the gremlins sleep irregularly and in whichever nest room they like, the number and type of gremlins in these rooms aren't fixed. There's a 1 in 3 chance that one of these nest rooms has any gremlins in it at all; if it does, the heroes find 1d4 sleeping gremlins. Roll 1d4 on the table below to determine the type of gremlin, or just choose the type.

Gremlins roused from their sleep are irritable and prone to attack; if presented with obviously superior enemies, a gremlin either flees in the opposite direction (all the nest rooms have two exits for this purpose) or surrenders if flight seems impossible. Fleeing gremlins try to meet up in areas **C5** or **C10** and alert the gremlins there to trouble.

1d4	Gremlin type
1	Mitflit (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 193)
2	Scrit (page 82)
3	Vexgit (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 134)
4	Gnagrif (page 83)

Treasure: Each nest room contains an assortment of trinkets worth 2d10 gp.

C8. FRIENDS IN NEED

A flickering light reveals a dark tunnel leading west and three people huddled together, speaking in hushed voices.

The heroes know these people: Ignaci, Okoro, and Tzeniwe. This cohort was assigned to map the areas beneath Warden House, next to Archhorn Library, but a cave-in blocked their way back. They don't realize they've followed the twisting tunnels outside their assigned area, and recently ran into the giant mining bees in area **C9**. While trying to look brave in front of Okoro, Ignaci got stung by a bee and learned, quite dramatically, that he has a severe allergy to bee stings. Ignaci's skin has broken out into hives and his tongue and throat are swollen. Okoro and Tzeniwe are too worried about his sudden symptoms to move him, and neither has the medical knowledge to help him. If left unaided, Ignaci could die.

The heroes can help if they can calm the frantic cohort and treat Ignaci. A hero can calm the trio with a successful DC 18 Diplomacy or Intimidation check, although you might allow other means to calm them with a similar DC. Once the attendants have calmed down, the heroes can either help them get Ignaci safely to the surface or treat him directly. A hero can treat Ignaci with a successful DC 20 Medicine check. The heroes can retry this check on a failure, but the DC increases by 2 each time. On a success, Ignaci is well enough that Okoro and Tzeniwe can get him to the surface without the heroes' help if the heroes describe a safe way up through Archhorn Library (as the cave-in blocks the path back up to Warden House). On a critical success, the hero quells Ignaci's symptoms entirely and he can walk unaided, though Okoro and Tzeniwe escort him to the surface anyway. On a critical failure, Ignaci goes into shock; unless a hero succeeds at another DC 20 Medicine check within 1 round, he dies.

The tunnel off the map to the west now leads to a large collapse and several dead-end tunnels. They don't contain anything of interest other than a few tracks from insects and gremlins coming and going.

Tzeniwe spotted the secret door across this room (that leads to area **C10**), but the last thing her group wanted to do was poke into secret chambers. Once the heroes have provided her group with any help, Tzeniwe tells them about the secret door.

XP Award: If the heroes calm the group to help Ignaci, award them 30 XP. If they thereafter save Ignaci with a successful Medicine check, award them an additional 80 XP. They also earn Ignaci's gratitude for saving his life.

C9. IRRITATED HIVE MODERATE 3

This natural chamber has strangely sticky walls. The air is filled with a heavy scent vaguely reminiscent of flowers.

This room is the hive of the giant mining bees drawn here by the *Vesicant Egg*. The gremlins corral all the giant mining bees into this one chamber—they don't realize that mining bees are generally solitary and don't like living in close quarters with each other. The sticky mess on the walls is a paste made of tree sap and crushed flowers, which the gremlins have determined, through trial and error, that the mining bees will eat.

Sticky Walls: Creatures will have difficultly moving through the room without brushing against the sticky sap. Any creature moving farther than 15 feet in a single Move action must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save at the end of its movement or take a –10-foot penalty to its Speeds until the end of its next turn (this Speed penalty isn't cumulative). Mining bees aren't slowed by the sap.

Creatures: Three mining bees live in this hive; they're currently in opposite parts of the chamber to avoid each other's company. The students now hiding out in area **C8** have already irritated the bees, who are now antagonistic and ready to attack anyone other than gremlins. A mining bee reduced to fewer than 6 Hit Points flees from the heroes as fast and as far as it can, which might alert the caverns' other denizens to trouble.

GIANT MINING BEES (3) CREATURE 2

Page 80

Initiative Perception +9

C10. WAR ROOM MODERATE 3

A table bearing a large cloth map pinned down with heavy rocks along the edges occupies much of this room. Though dirty and tattered, the aged map provides a detailed view of the Magaambya campus. Drawn atop the map are several caves and tunnels, creating a connected web of passages between the buildings.

Aside from the large map on the table, the heroes find little of use here. The table is stout wood and set 2 feet off the floor on heavy wooden legs. There isn't enough room for Small or larger creatures to fit comfortably beneath it, but the gremlins can scurry under the table with ease and use it to gain cover from larger creatures.

The map is the property of the Magaambya; Kurshkin stole it to more easily plan with Stone Ghost. They've since covered the map with scribblings, partially completed schemes, and notes in a mishmash of Common, Undercommon, and Terran. Even though the plans are indecipherable, they plainly depict targeted attacks on the Magaambya. Anyone examining the map can see that the storage

room and outdoor Introduction Ceremony site are circled, as are the Tree-Stump Library and Tireless Hall—all locations that Stone Ghost's minions have targeted. Many of the abandoned tunnels beneath the school are marked on the map, too, with the hatch leading to the Spire Dormitory circled with a note in Undercommon reading, "They Live Here. Send Urbel to kill them." Urbel is Kurshkin's brutish enforcer. He doesn't particularly relish going alone into a dorm full of magic-trained students, so he has been putting off Kurshkin's command to venture out and eliminate the heroes. The heroes most likely find Urbel in area **C13**.

Creatures: Five gremlins are trying to decipher the instructions on the map in this room. Stymied by a combination of their limited experience with maps and the unclear notes, they haven't had much luck. Each instead argues that their own interest should be what the gremlins pursue as a whole. They have a –2 penalty to Perception checks for initiative if caught mid-argument, since they aren't paying much attention to anything else. Once the gremlins spot intruders, they quickly shout in alarm and attack. When fighting bigger creatures, they prefer to dart under the planning table for protection.

The gremlins include a blunt-snouted and pugnacious gnagrif who wants to focus on digging, a gangly jinkin who thinks cursing the Magaambya's magic is the best next step, and three warty mitflits who urge another insect attack (despite the fact that the last one didn't succeed and cost them their most powerful insects). There's a sixth gremlin here who isn't part of the planning: a lice-infested grimple gremlin named Binji who the other gremlins all boss around as their servant. She's currently trying to scrub insect entrails off of a knife in a corner of the room. Binji tries to stay out of the way during a fight so she can talk to the heroes afterwards.

If Kurshkin survived the attack in Chapter 1, she's also here trying to maintain order, making for a Severe encounter.

GNAGRIF CREATURE 2

Page 83

Initiative Perception +7

JINKIN CREATURE 1

Pathfinder Bestiary 193

Initiative Perception +7

MITFLITS (3) CREATURE –1

Pathfinder Bestiary 192

Initiative Perception +4

BINJI CREATURE –1

UNIQUE CN TINY FEY GREMLIN

Female grimple servant (*Pathfinder Bestiary 3* 120)

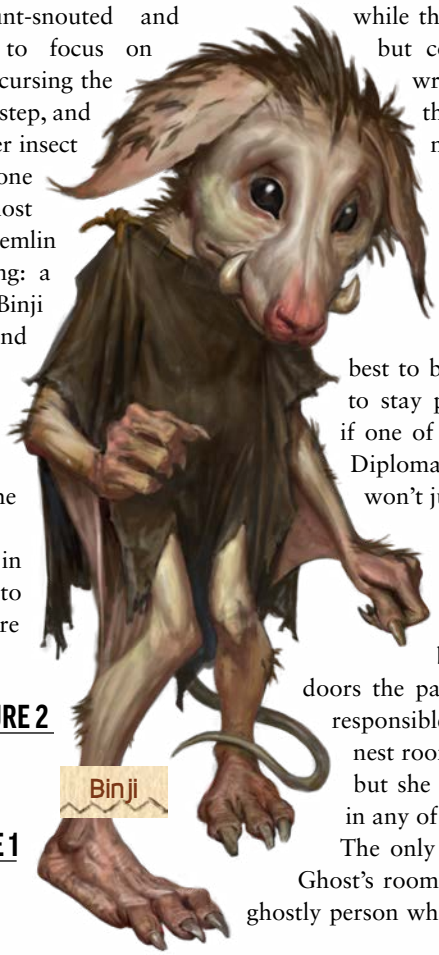
Initiative Perception +6

Languages Common, Undercommon

So Many Lice The prevalence of insects on the Magaambya campus means Binji is more infested with gremlin lice than most grimples. The Reflex DC to avoid infestation from her gremlin lice is 15 rather than 13.

Lots of Noise: If the fight here was particularly noisy, and if you determined that there are any gremlins currently in area **C7b**, the noise wakes them up. Rather than rushing to join the combat, however, the gremlins hide in their nests and prepare to ambush anyone who comes by.

Befriending Binji: Binji has had enough of her mistreatment at the hands of the other gremlins. Turning herself over to the big folk who bested Kurshkin seems like a safe bet to her. She hides while the heroes fight the other gremlins but comes out afterwards, nervously wringing her hands together on the hem of her burlap tunic. Binji makes a simple offer: she'll aid the heroes if they protect her from the other gremlins and take her away with them when they leave. Until then, she dutifully tags behind the heroes, haphazardly tidying up their messes and doing her best to be helpful. If the heroes want her to stay put someplace, she does so only if one of the heroes succeeds at a DC 18 Diplomacy check to convince her they won't just abandon her.



So long as Binji accompanies the heroes, she notes when they're coming up on an area where the other gremlins are likely to be, and she identifies any secret doors the party passes by. As Binji has been responsible for cleaning up all the gremlin nest rooms, she knows where they all are, but she doesn't know whether anyone is in any of the rooms at the moment.

The only room Binji won't enter is Stone Ghost's room (area **C15**). She's terrified of the ghostly person who seems neither completely living

CAN WE KEEP HER?

If your players decide to keep Binji around upon completing their agreement, she happily helps them in any capacity they'd like, so long as she doesn't have to frequent crowded or noisy places. She can be an assistant, study partner, spy, or even combatant, though she's objectively bad at fighting. The faculty doesn't mind Binji's presence, so long as the heroes agree to be responsible for and kind to her; other students have kept stranger companions, to be sure. Binji's lice likely won't win the heroes any favors, as the irritating bugs get into any space Binji sleeps or works.

nor properly dead, and she discourages the heroes from having anything to do with him.

Treasure: One of the paperweights on the map is a lump of amber worth 35 gp. Secured beneath the map table are three *lesser healing potions*. The gremlins don't think to use the potions in the heat of battle, but they'll remember to drink them if the heroes retreat from a fight here. Anyone Searching the room discovers the cache of potions with a successful DC 14 Perception check.

XP Award: If the heroes recover the map detailing Stone Ghost's plans, award them 30 XP. Award them an additional 80 XP for treating Binji well and agreeing to lead her somewhere safe.

C11. PANTRY

Though likely once organized, this storage area has been pillaged over and over again, leaving barrels pried or punched open and sacks spilling their contents across the grimy floor. Piles of garbage flood the corners. A small cook fire has stained the ceiling with soot, and the nearby utensils seem to have never seen wash water.

Binji usually works here, trying hard to keep the room orderly while the other gremlins simply take what they want and leave messes for her to clean up.

Treasure: A bag just visible at the top of one of the shelves, well out of easy gremlin reach, is a *bag of holding type I*. It contains a taxidermy bloodseeker missing its beak and, perhaps unsurprisingly, a *bloodseeker beak*.

C12. BINJI'S BEDROLL

This intersection has a wad of blankets pushed up against one wall, out of the way. Tiny bugs crawl all over the blankets.

None of the other gremlins want Binji to bunk with them, so she sleeps in this out-of-the-way nook. Her blankets are crawling with gremlin lice; anyone touching the blankets must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or become infested (as with Binji's Gremlin Lice ability). The beleaguered gremlin has nothing of value in her blankets beyond a few poorly carved figurines that she considers her only friends.

C13. TRAINING GROUND MODERATE 3

The smell of rotten meat assails the senses in this large cavern. A natural pillar in the middle of the room bears several metal hooks with gruesome slabs of meat hanging from each.

Kurshkin's chief enforcer, the nuglub bully Urbel, is usually found here. He's supposed to be planning an assassination attempt against the students of the Spire Dormitory or helping with the mining, but neither of these tasks interests him much. With Kurshkin gone (either defeated by the heroes or too busy with planning in area **C10**), Urbel spends his time trying to teach a giant tsetse fly to serve as his mount.

Creatures: Urbel and the giant fly are both clearly irritated. Since Urbel doesn't really know much about training animals, he simply wrestles himself atop the fly with the hopes that it'll learn to be a loyal mount. This approach hasn't worked. All it has done is teach the fly to buck him off and make it ill-tempered.

When Urbel spots the heroes, he grunts in Undercommon, "Yer making my job easy by coming to me." He draws his weapon and attempts to climb atop the giant fly. The fly tries to buck him off immediately, but if Urbel hangs on, he shouts with triumph and commands the fly to charge the heroes. If Urbel is bucked off, he simply lumbers into combat directly. Urbel prefers to attack prone targets; if the heroes don't provoke his Kneecapper reaction, he tries to Shove them. If a hero lands a solid hit on him, Urbel usually takes his first action to Demoralize that hero with a frightful lunge and grunt. Urbel fights until reduced to fewer than 15 Hit Points, at which point he throws down his pick and flees.

The aggressive giant fly prefers to attack animals if any are present, but it generally focuses its attacks on whoever hurt it most recently. If Urbel is reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points, the fly dimly realizes that it has an opportunity to pay back all its mistreatment at the gremlin's hands. It starts attacking Urbel rather than the heroes, which makes Urbel groan in frustration as he must split up his attacks between the heroes and the traitorous fly.

URBEL CREATURE 4

UNIQUE CE SMALL FEY GREMLIN

Male nuglub bully (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 135)

Perception +8; darkvision

Languages Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +9 (+11 to Shove), Crafting +7 (+9 traps), Intimidation +12, Stealth +10

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** –1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +2

Items pouch with 4 gold teeth worth 3 gp each, *+1 striking pick*

AC 21; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

HP 68; **Weaknesses** cold iron 4

Kneecapper ↷ **Trigger** A Medium creature within Urbel's reach leaves a square during its move action; **Effect** Urbel lashes out at the triggering creature's knees. He attempts an Acrobatics check against the creature's Reflex DC. On a success, the target falls and lands prone.

Speed 30 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee ❖ *pick* +14 (fatal d10, shove), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing

Melee ❖ jaws +14 (finesse), **Damage** 1d6+5 piercing plus Grab

Melee ❖ claw +14 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d4+5 slashing

Primal Innate Spells DC 21, attack +13; **2nd** *shatter*; **1st** *grease*, *shocking grasp*; **Cantrips (2nd)** *prestidigitation*

Bully Any melee weapon Urbel uses gains the shove trait, and if he rolls a critical failure when attempting to Shove a creature with the weapon, he treats the result as a failure instead.

Pound Down Urbel's melee Strikes deal an additional 1d6 damage to prone targets.

GIANT TSETSE FLY CREATURE 2

Page 81

Initiative Perception +9

Buck ↷ DC 18

C14. GRUESOME TROPHIES

Three masks and three cloaks are affixed to the south wall of this claustrophobic cave, as though in mockery of people, with arms extended to the sides. All look colorful, but dirty and bloodstained. One of the masks depicts a stern antelope, another a kindly hare, and the last a smiling warthog.

The cloaks and masks are grim trophies of Magaambyans that Stone Ghost murdered some time ago; he likes to admire these trophies and reflect on his kills when he comes and goes from his room.

One of the outfits—the hare mask and a bloodstained cloak in yellow and white—has been affixed to the secret door to the south that leads to Stone Ghost's room. Hanging the mask and cloak in that spot makes the secret door sit slightly askew on its hinges, reducing the DC to discover it to 13. Furthermore, anyone looking over the outfit can attempt a Perception check to discover the secret door, even if they aren't actively Searching that area.

Anyone looking over the cloaks can attempt a DC 15 Nature or Survival check. On a success, dirt and dust on the lower half of the cloaks indicates that each wearer was somehow pulled partially into the ground before being killed. This clue hints at one of Stone Ghost's abilities, which the heroes might shortly witness firsthand!

Treasure: The mask of the kindly hare is a *mask of mercy* (page 74). Takulu can help a hero transfer the abilities of this mask to a non-magical mask in a hero's possession (such as the mask they constructed during the First Masking) if they choose; doing so takes 1 day of downtime.

XP Award: No one at the school realizes that these students have died, much less that Stone Ghost killed them. Returning their masks allows them to be honored and remembered appropriately. Award the heroes 30 XP for bringing the masks back to the school.

C15. STONE GHOST'S ROOM SEVERE 3

This well-appointed bedroom and study almost makes one forget that it's hidden deep underground. The space is neatly furnished with mismatched items, including a bearskin rug and extraordinarily comfortable-looking chair. A heavy professor's desk sits off to one side, along with a massive, gently scuffed four-poster bed. Rugs and curtains hang in an inadequate attempt to make the space seem less like a cave, but craggy wall peeks through the gaps.

Stone Ghost keeps his room remarkably clean. Most of the furniture looks barely touched; no dust sits on anything, and the bed is neatly made. The only exception is the desk, which bears several papers and journals and obviously sees frequent use. A large clay jug of water sits on the desk as well.

Creatures: Stone Ghost spends his time planning here. If he's unaware of the party's presence in the tunnels, the heroes find him diligently working at his desk, perfecting his schemes. More likely, due to fleeing gremlins or the cessation of the omnipresent buzzing, Stone Ghost suspects intruders. Once he has reason to think someone is approaching his room, he enters one of the walls behind a hanging tapestry and waits, peeking an ear out occasionally to hear whether anyone has entered his room. Detecting Stone Ghost's careful concealment requires a character to succeed at a DC 25 Perception check. If undetected, he listens to what the heroes do. So long as they don't get near his desk or discuss his notes—which he knows are very incriminating—he remains hidden and hopes they go away. If they move over to the desk, discuss him by name, or mention any of the Magaambya teachers, he decides to kill them to protect the secret of his presence here.

Two jinkin gremlins also hide underneath the bed, tinkering with a magic mask they're trying to curse. They know that Stone Ghost doesn't like them making a lot of noise, so they remain quiet, whether or not they know the heroes are present. Once they know there are intruders in the room, they wait to attack until Stone Ghost attacks first. A jinkin reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points flees and doesn't return, and both gremlins flee immediately if Stone Ghost is defeated.

To protect his notes, Stone Ghost steps away from the wall and swings his morningstar (he's slowed

1 on a round where he starts his turn inside a wall) while calling for the gremlins to attack. In subsequent rounds, Stone Ghost uses his spells and his Entombing Grasp ability to incapacitate the heroes and club them to death. His favorite tactic is to pull someone into the ground, then clobber them with his morningstar. Stone Ghost doesn't ask for surrender or give it, as he's too proud and stubborn to do something so crude as beg for his life in the face of defeat. However, if he thinks his defeat is imminent, he casts *shatter* on the water jug on the desk, dousing all the incriminating notes so that no one can learn his plans.

STONE GHOST **CREATURE 5**

Page 88

Initiative Perception +13

JINKINS (2) **CREATURE 1**

Pathfinder Bestiary 193

Initiative Stealth +7

Stone Ghost's Notes: It takes several minutes to sort through all the incriminating journals, maps, and notes on the desk. If Stone Ghost managed to shatter the water jug, the notes are indecipherable unless a hero succeeds at a DC 20 Nature or Society check to Decipher Writing, and the laborious reconstruction takes hours. Unfortunately for Stone Ghost, the water doesn't wholly obliterate this evidence.

The notes and maps concern the Magaambya grounds, including access tunnels, subterranean rooms, and other underground places Stone Ghost was attempting to reach by digging. These maps include the access tunnels under the campus that the heroes might have discovered through the maintenance hatch in the Spire Dormitory. The journals detail Stone Ghost's plans.

Some older notes are by an "Uduak Basni," Stone Ghost's old name before he took the title the gremlins gave him. More recent notes indicate surprise at the number of insects found on the campus, followed by delight when he realized that digging insects could help create a network of interconnected tunnels beneath the school. One note in particular reads, "Not clear why so many insects are drawn to campus, but the gremlins do fine at keeping them in line. I have the gremlins working the insects to death, to take their little minds off of the fact I'm doing the same to them." The insect attack on Tireless Hall is just the first of several attack plans detailed in these notes, each aiming to inflict greater damage and death upon the Magaambya.

Leaderless Denizens: Once the heroes have defeated Stone Ghost, the surviving gremlins in the caverns begin to clear out, as they no longer have anyone to command them and fear retribution from the magic school if they stay. Within a day or so, all the gremlins have relocated elsewhere. Unless the heroes managed to capture them, they might cause trouble in isolated places on campus in subsequent adventures.

The insects don't leave and, in fact, become healthier once they aren't being worked so hard by the gremlins. If relocated, they eventually return due to the *Vesicant Egg* still calling to them.

Treasure: The jinkins under the bed haven't yet cursed the *rhinoceros mask* (page 74) they're tinkering with. Its enchantment can be transferred to a non-magical mask just like the *mask of mercy* in area **C14**. The bearskin rug is exceptionally well made and is worth 30 gp.

XP Award: Award the heroes 30 XP if they learn what's in Stone Ghost's notes.

Exploration Aftermath

When the heroes have defeated Stone Ghost and finished mapping the caverns, they can return to Takulu and Koride. The area in front of Tireless Hall has been turned into an enormous field station, with insects of all sizes being hauled outside and sorted. Koride oversees the investigation, labeling and cataloguing the creatures in the aftermath of this mysterious invasion, while students provide her with samples and reports. Takulu meets the heroes and takes any maps or notes they offer, but he knows they've already been through a lot.

"We will be working on solutions for hours, maybe days," Teacher Ot says with a kindly smile. "There will be time for you to give me a complete report of your findings tomorrow morning. For now, I'm giving you an important assignment—go home and rest."

Treasure: If Ignaci survived, he's recovering well after receiving the heroes' aid. In gratitude, he offers to make the heroes any two common alchemical elixirs of 5th level or less that they choose.

Anadi Arrival ..... Extreme 3

When the heroes return to the field station the next day, Koride and Takulu are still there, having worked through the night. They've made several important discoveries. Koride isn't willing to talk about them, even to students she likes; she has started to worry that the *Vesicant Egg*, which she had been secretly studying, is somehow responsible, though she isn't ready to admit that to anyone just yet. Takulu, on the other hand, is eager to share information with the heroes

as they inform him about their cavern explorations in more detail. He listens intently to the heroes, and provides them these findings during the conversation.

First, the insects were drawn by some pervasive yet persistent psychic call.

Second, gremlins, pests, and other creatures that aren't strictly insects (like spiders) have responded to the call as well. Of course, they've been closely questioned. None can provide any details other than experiencing a strange longing, and a sense that they must go to the Magaambya.

Third, the emanation is virtually undetectable but seems to be ongoing. The heroes have defeated the villain weaponizing the infestations, but they aren't over. The emanation isn't localized, so pinpointing its source is impossible without more work or some new angle of discovery.

When the conversation with Takulu winds down, Esi rushes up to inform him that three prospective students seeking admission have just arrived. She suggests, a bit uncomfortably, that they're likely to cause a disturbance unless someone speaks with them right away. If pressed, Esi explains that the visitors are anadis. Esi doesn't mind anadis, as she's good friends with Tzeniwe and her children, but she knows that not everyone is comfortable with the spider-like people. Takulu thanks Esi and dismisses her. He asks the heroes to come with him to meet these visitors.

The three anadi seekers are in the open area near the Speaker's Stage while a few students keep a cautious distance. Rather than traveling in human form, as is typical for anadis, they're each in their hybrid forms. This behavior demonstrates that they're likely new to the area and thus unfamiliar with Nantambu customs or opinions about anadis, which a hero who succeeds at a DC 15 Society check realizes.

Takulu strides forward to greet the three visitors, who look around with wonder in their many eyes. "Welcome and a kind hello, new friends. It is my pleasure to greet you today. You may call me Teacher Ot."

"Teacher Ot, we would learn from you and from the school. We humbly submit ourselves as pupils." All three anadis bow respectfully. "I am Rainbows-Reflected-Upon-Gossamer-Strands, who is called Goss. This is Droplets-Hanging-Gently Savanakin and Barest-Threads-Billowing Maztachia. We have some small knowledge of magic already. Presenting ourselves without sponsorship is highly irregular, we know, but we all feel as though the Magaambya is...the place we must be. Something is calling us here, Teacher Ot."

Teacher Ot looks meaningfully back to your group before responding, "We welcome the new angles of discovery that your presence will bring. I would like to introduce you to some of our most recent students. They have already distinguished themselves and might provide you with—"

Before Teacher Ot can finish, the nearby students shout and scatter. Three large forms soar across the canal from the city, screeching loudly.

Three griffons have been stalking the anadis as they moved through Nantambu. Recently escaped from an animal merchant, the hungry creatures consider spiders tasty and decide to make a meal of them. The griffons are visually striking, with blackbird heads and feline leopard bodies. They all look underfed and are obviously quite hungry.

Although everyone else in the area scatters, Takulu grips his staff and prepares to defend the three anadi seekers. He hopes the heroes choose to do so as well, knowing that he can't handle the griffons on his own.

Three griffons pose an Extreme challenge for the heroes, but they aren't alone; Takulu and the anadi seekers all fight. Still, the heroes must face off with powerful foes. As the griffons target the anadis, who aren't very tough, it's possible that one or two of them might be killed in this fight. If the heroes try to protect the anadis, have the griffons attack the heroes instead to show that their efforts at defense are meaningful. In any event, at least one anadi should survive, as these newcomers have a role to play in unraveling the mystery of the *Vesicant Egg* in the next adventure.

Creatures: The griffons begin combat by making Flying Strafe attacks, attacking one anadi and one hero (or Takulu) each time they do. A wounded griffon lands to fight with its beak and wings. Once two griffons are defeated, the third flies off only if reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points.

Takulu aids the heroes as best he can, providing them Quick Lessons to aid their attacks and administering his *healing potion* and spells to injured heroes. The anadis have little to bring to bear other than *color spray* and *magic missile*, but they try to make these attacks count. They know that staying in melee range of a griffon is a death sentence, so they avoid doing so at all costs.

GRIFFONS (3) CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 194
Initiative Perception +11

TAKULU OT CREATURE 4

Page 90
Initiative Perception +11

ANADI SEEKERS (3) CREATURE 1

Pathfinder Bestiary 193
Initiative Perception +7

Treasure: The anadis don't know where the griffons came from—the heroes can solve this mystery in the next adventure—but they're grateful for the timely assistance. They provide the heroes a silk *dancing scarf* in gratitude.

Conclusion

Once the griffons have either been killed or subdued, life in the Magaambya can return to some semblance of normal. If any griffons survived, Takulu asks for Ahassunu, an iruxi lore-speaker with a love of predatory animals, to take charge of them.

The next day, Takulu Ot asks the heroes to join him in his office to discuss everything that transpired in the caverns. If they've yet to give him the map from area **C10** or Stone Ghost's notes from area **C15**, they can give those to him now. If the notes are waterlogged, Takulu casts *mending* and uses his experience with book restoration to fix them, making it something of an impromptu lesson for the heroes.

Upon reviewing the notes, Takulu makes the connection with Uduak Basni right away. Takulu shakes his head and sighs.

"This 'Stone Ghost' you encountered was once Uduak Basni. He was an initiate, but he felt he did not need to earn power or give back to the community. He came to resent that he was asked to prove himself. He grew cruel. Uduak slaughtered a mischievous gang of gremlins and was temporarily detained until we could decide whether to expel him. During his imprisonment, a spell he cast in an attempt to escape backfired and, we believed then, killed him. It is strange that he survived, but stranger still that gremlins flocked to his side. I assume fear played a large part in that."

Takulu asks the heroes to fill in anything that he might have missed. He realizes that Uduak's presence explains the gremlins, and he certainly maintined control over the insects, but nothing about Uduak's story or his notes explains what has drawn so many insects to the Magaambya in the first place.

"I fear we have moved beyond my expertise, but do not worry. I know someone who may have more insight. Janatimo was my mentor, just as I am yours. He is one of the Magaambya's cleverest lore-speakers, though he rarely stays in one place for long. I would like to gain his wisdom and, to be honest, introduce your impressive group to him. We will discuss with him in person the next time he returns. In the meantime, thank you for all you have done." Takulu gives a warm smile as he stands to signal the end of the meeting. "We will speak again soon."

The heroes have some time to reflect on what they've learned, as the *Vesicant Egg*'s threat remains both subtle and inexorable, for now. The Strength of Thousands campaign continues with Janatimo's return in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #170: Spoken on the Song Wind*.

Anadi Seeker

LIFE IN THE ACADEMY

"Listen, for this is a story that means something. I sing the songs of those who came before. They taught us much that we remember today, and even more that we have forgotten. I sing the song of the one, the Old Mage, who showed us the way. I sing the songs of the Ten, the Magic Warriors who spread his mission. I sing the songs of the hundreds who built this school and shone a light over all the world. And I sing the songs of the thousands, all those who came before us and made this place the Magaambya. Their strength and their legacies live on in me. Now they shall live on in you as well." —Lore-Speaker Janatimo

In the Strength of Thousands Adventure Path, you'll have the opportunity to play characters who are students at the Magaambya, the oldest and most storied magic school in all Golarion. You'll learn new magic, advance in your studies, choose one of the five prestigious branches to join, and more. As you continue your academic career, adventure will call, but you'll never cease to be a Magaambyan, tied inextricably to the thousands upon thousands of students who came before you, stretching across eight millennia of history and tracing back to the legacy of Old-Mage Jatembe, one of the most legendary and powerful wizards in the history of Golarion.

The academia subsystem helps you express your character's academic and intellectual growth throughout your time at the Magaambya, starting as a new initiate struggling to find your place at the school to an academic powerhouse respected by all researchers in your field and beyond. You'll continue your studies alongside your adventuring career, allowing you to gain a series of useful benefits to improve your character's capabilities based on the progress of your academic work.

The Five Branches of Scholarship

"As the creeping menace swept across the land, the snake led the way, ever the adaptable guide, ready to shed skin to fit the situation. The patient leopard, full of valor, crept closer toward the oncoming threat, the better to protect her friends from danger. The spider whispered quietly. Would the people be safe? Our comrades, our friends, our families? Would this be the end? The hyena laughed—not even he, who looks between, could have imagined the scope of the threat. But it was not the end, and the elephant never forgot." —Elephant's Chronicles

Magaambyan scholars believe in many fundamental values of scholarship. Key among them are adaptability, camaraderie, imagination, knowledge, and valor. The school's faculty and lessons are divided into five branches, each emphasizing one of these values.

Cascade Bearers esteem **imagination**, from the dreams of the most visionary magical theorists to the innovations of creative problem-solvers of all stripes.

Emerald Boughs emphasize **camaraderie**, the sense of community and connection to fellow Magaambyans; they also interact with those outside the Magaambya and spread the academy's message.

Rain-Scribes value **adaptability** in thoughts and deeds, as well as a willingness to admit errors and learn from past mistakes.

Tempest-Sun Mages inspire **valor**, not only the physical courage to stand up for friends and the school, but also the intellectual courage to consider opposing viewpoints and widen one's understanding rather than staying entrenched in a single paradigm.

Uzunjati understand that **knowledge** lives in stories passed down through the generations and also is earned every day through personal experience.

While all Magaambyans are expected to embody these values to varying degrees, and members of the different branches work together on and off campus, every student joins one primary branch to shape their academic understanding. In addition to this choice, you'll also select a secondary branch that influences the expression of your primary branch and supplements your education. Your learning within

GMS, SHARE THIS WITH YOUR PLAYERS

The details of the academia subsystem aren't a secret. This article is spoiler-free and written from a player's perspective, so you can share it with your players and help them make informed decisions for their characters' academic careers. Throughout the Adventure Path, you'll find numerous opportunities to tie into the academia subsystem, called out either in sidebars or in the text.

these branches progresses from levels 1 to 20, just like your character. You can never have more levels in your primary branch than your character's level, and you can never have more levels in your secondary branch than half your character's level. When you create your character, choose a primary branch and a secondary branch; both begin at level 0.

Classes at the Magaambya are open to students of any branch, but each focuses on the values embodied by a specific branch. If your primary branch is Tempest-Sun Mages and your secondary branch is Rain-Scribes, you'll attend Tempest-Sun Mage classes to advance your level in your primary branch or Rain-Scribe classes to advance your level in your secondary branch. You don't need to create a specific course load or class schedule, since you're always choosing whether to focus on your primary or secondary branch.

BRANCH SKILLS, LORES, AND FEATS

Each branch has two or three associated skills, one or more subcategories of lore, and a general feat. As you gain levels in your branch, you'll gain benefits that apply to the associated skills and lore, as well as the associated general feat.

CHANGING BRANCHES

It's perfectly natural that a player might choose a primary or secondary branch at character creation and, after roleplaying the character for some time, decide it was the wrong branch to represent their character's personality. While your GM could create a downtime activity to allow branch retraining in place of advancing in a branch, this can wind up permanently leaving your character behind the rest of your party. Instead, work with your GM to swap out your branches. Keep in mind, the Magaambya looks extremely poorly on those who flippantly attempt to alter their branches of scholarship to gain personal power and will staunchly deny any such exploit.

Advancing Your Branch Level

"From my time studying medicine at the Magaambya, I might not have learned any magic, but I did learn to value service over promoting my academic publications. That's not to say the Magaambya doesn't produce some of the finest scholarship in the world, but rather that a true Magaambyan doesn't care about taking credit. It's about building knowledge for everyone. Of course, that sort of attitude led to my work being plagiarized before I started taking authorship more seriously, so this ideal isn't as an absolute. Still, it's the heroic attitude of Magaambyan scholars that has changed the world for millennia and continues to change it to this day." —Kassi Aziril

Unlike your character's level, your levels in your primary and secondary branches don't advance automatically when you gain Experience Points. Instead, you advance your branches through academic achievement; early in your career, this typically happens via bookwork and exams. As a student at the Magaambya, you can use either the Study downtime activity or the Cram downtime activity to represent your accomplishments in your studies and exams, with the timing based on the academic calendar (as noted for the GM in each volume of the Adventure Path).

Truly accomplished scholars also might be able to use the Practical Research activity as a downtime activity in the field to gain additional new insights and academic advancements during adventures, as opposed to during the normal curriculum. Later volumes of the Adventure Path will note such opportunities for the GM, but if you have additional ideas for location-based research beyond those provided in the adventures

TABLE 1: BRANCHES, SKILLS, LORES, AND FEATS

Branch	Skills	Lore	General Feat
Cascade Bearers	Arcana, Occultism, Religion	Academia Lore	Canny Acumen
Emerald Boughs	Deception, Diplomacy, Society	Specific settlement (such as Nantambu Lore)	Adopted Ancestry
Rain-Scribes	Medicine, Nature, Survival	Specific terrain (such as Forest Lore)	Fleet
Tempest-Sun Mages	Intimidation, Performance	Warfare Lore	Toughness
Uzunjati	Crafting, Lore	Any Lore	Incredible Initiative

themselves, the GM might reward your creativity with an additional opportunity to perform the Practical Research activity and raise your branch levels!

Even with these extra opportunities, you can't advance your primary branch level above your character's level, or your secondary branch level above half your character's level (both with a minimum of 0). If the result of any of these activities would raise a branch level past those limits, put a star next to your branch's level. The next time your character gains a level, raise that branch's level to the new limit and erase the star. This way, if you have an opportunity to advance your branch level, you don't have to wait until your character level is high enough to pursue it.

Each of these downtime activities takes a few months, as they occur over an academic semester. You might have encounters during or between these checks as the story requires.

STUDY

DOWNTIME

Requirements You are an initiate, attendant, or conversant.

You give everything you have to your studies, in keeping with your branch. Choose either your primary or secondary branch and attempt a skill check with one of the branch's associated skills against a standard DC of the branch's level.

Critical Success Incredible results! You ace every exam and cause a stir that all the instructors notice. Increase the level of the branch you chose by 2.

Success You succeed in your studies admirably. Increase the level of the branch you chose by 1.

Failure You need to work harder and try again. Your branch level remains the same.

Critical Failure You make a major mistake that requires you to perform remedial studies. The next time you would get an opportunity to attempt this activity, you must skip that opportunity to catch up.

CRAM

DOWNTIME

Requirements You are an initiate, attendant, or conversant, and your branch level for either your primary or secondary branch is 2 or more levels below the limit.

Realizing that you're falling behind in your studies, you cram more than you probably should. You Study twice, each in a branch that satisfies the activity requirements. However, the extra studying comes at a price. Until the next time you take the Study downtime activity, you're particularly tired from all the extra hours cramming; at the start of each day of adventuring, you must succeed at a DC 8 flat check or be fatigued for that day.

PRACTICAL RESEARCH

DOWNTIME

Requirement You are a conversant or lore-speaker.

You identify something interesting in the field and perform special research on it. This requires an appropriate check, which the GM will describe when the opportunity arises. The results of the check vary. While they typically include all the benefits of the Study activity, some opportunities for Practical Research also offer unique benefits, such as access to new character options.

TABLE 2: BRANCH BENEFITS BY LEVEL

Level	Benefit
1	Additional Lore
2	Steeped in History +1
3	Dedicated Attendant
4	Skill Feat (Trained)
5	Branch Influence +1
6	Skill Increase (Expert)
7	First Branch Feat
8	General Feat
9	Skill Feat (Expert)
10	Skill Increase (Master)
11	Steeped in History +2
12	Second Branch Feat
13	Branch Influence +2
14	Skill Increase (Master)
15	Skill Feat (Master)
16	Make Your Own Luck
17	Branch Influence +3
18	Skill Increase (Legendary)
19	Skill Feat (Legendary)
20	Magical Paragon

Branch Benefits

"Many of you already understand that the five branches of scholarship shape your journey through the Magaambya. What you probably haven't realized is that they will shape your legacy as well. All of us stand here buoyed by the strength of the thousands who came before, each with their own unique story to tell. Ask yourself: what will your story be?" –High Sun-Mage Oyamba

At every branch level, you gain the benefit listed in Table 2 above. The benefit entries below also include the branch levels at which you gain them.

ADDITIONAL LORE 1ST

At 1st level in a branch, you learn more of the Magaambya's deep well of lore associated with your branch. You gain the Additional Lore feat in a Lore skill associated with the branch.

ACADEMIA? NO THANKS

While many players in an Adventure Path about a magic academy might be interested in developing their characters' academic careers, some might want to skip right to the action. That's okay! You can either skip the subsystem entirely, in which case characters will be a little less versatile than normal, or just allow characters to automatically advance their primary branch at every even level, to a maximum branch level of 11 when the character reaches level 20.

STEEPED IN HISTORY 2ND

At 2nd level in a branch, you learn about the history of the branch and the Magaambya in general. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Recall Knowledge about the Magaambya, the tenets or history of your branch, and members of your branch.

At 11th level, this increases to a +2 circumstance bonus.

DEDICATED ATTENDANT 3RD

At 3rd level in a branch, if you have completed your Perquisite, you have proven your commitment to a sufficient degree that your branch promotes and supports you as an affiliated attendant. The first time you reach this level in a branch, you gain the Magaambyan Attendant Dedication feat (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Character Guide* 101) as a bonus feat (even if you haven't taken enough feats with a previous archetype to take another dedication feat).

SKILL FEAT 4TH

At 4th level in a branch, you uncover hidden techniques that grant you extra benefits from your branch's associated skills. You gain a skill feat that requires the trained rank in one the branch's associated skills.

At 9th level, you gain an additional skill feat that requires the expert or trained rank in one the branch's associated skills; at 15th level, you gain an additional skill feat that requires master or lower rank in one of the branch's associated skills; and at 19th level, you gain an additional skill feat that requires legendary or lower rank in one of the branch's associated skills. For any of these skill feats, you can select a variable skill feat, such as Automatic Knowledge or Assurance, as long as you do so for an associated skill.

BRANCH INFLUENCE 5TH

At 5th level in a branch, you gain greater influence, making it easier to collaborate, hoodwink, or browbeat members of that branch. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus on Deception, Diplomacy, Intimidation, and Performance checks to interact with members of the branch.

At 13th level, this increases to a +2 circumstance bonus, and at 17th level, it increases again to a +3 circumstance bonus.

SKILL INCREASE 6TH

At 6th level in a branch, and every 4 levels thereafter, your studies lead you to deeper understanding of your branch's associated skills, causing you to gain an additional skill increase that you can use to raise one of the branch's associated skills, up to a maximum of expert.

At 10th branch level or higher, you can use these skill increases to become a master in a skill in which you're already an expert. At 18th level, you can use this skill increase to become legendary in a skill in which you're already a master. For Uzunjati, who have Lore as an associated skill, you gain the Additional Lore feat when you choose to improve Lore, instead of gaining a single skill increase to a Lore.

BRANCH FEAT 7TH

At 7th level in a branch, you become so immersed in your branch's secrets that you gain access to special training only offered to other members of your branch. You gain the 6th-level Magaambyan attendant archetype feat requiring affiliation with your branch (such as Uzunjati Storytelling for the Uzunjati). You must still meet any skill prerequisites the feat has. If you already have that feat, you gain an additional 6th-level class feat (even if your branch's feat was not a class feat).

At 12th level, you also gain the 10th-level Magaambyan attendant archetype feat requiring affiliation with the branch (such as Tempest-Sun Shielding for the Tempest-Sun Mages). If you already have that feat, you gain an additional 10th-level class feat (even if your branch's feat was not a class feat).

GENERAL FEAT 8TH

At 8th level in a branch, your understanding of your branch's traditions improves your general capabilities, stretching beyond your studies in specific skills. You

gain the general feat associated with the branch. If you already have that general feat, you gain a 1st-level general feat of your choice instead.

MAKE YOUR OWN LUCK 16TH

At 16th level in a branch, you're so accomplished with your branch's associated skills that you make your own luck. Once per day, you can reroll a skill check with one of those skills and take the new result. This is a fortune effect.

MAGICAL PARAGON 20TH

At 20th level in a branch, you embody the branch so completely that you gain a unique special ability depending on your branch. Many of these abilities build upon Magaambyan attendant archetype feats you have gained.

Cascade Bearers: Nothing is beyond your imagination. Once per day, you can cast any common 7th-level spell from the arcane, divine, occult, or primal spell lists without expending a spell slot. When you do, you use your spellcasting proficiency for your halcyon spells.

Emerald Boughs: You can stretch your hideaway well beyond the original intended usage, creating a special extradimensional abode in which to rest with your allies, host visiting diplomats, and more. At any time, you can spend 1 minute to enter and expand your hideaway into a *magnificent mansion*; it remains in this form until you leave, at which point it expels all remaining guests and becomes a normal hideaway as Emerald Boughs Hideaway until you spend another minute to enter and expand your hideaway again.

Rain-Scribes: You can adapt to almost any situation. You can survive in severe and extreme cold and heat without taking damage. You move at full Speed through difficult terrain and greater difficult terrain, and take no damage from hazardous terrain. When using Rain-Scribe Mobility, you clear the effects of all three types of terrain from the spaces you enter for 1 round.

Tempest-Sun Mages: You have the courage and magic to protect all your allies from harm. When you use Tempest-Sun Shielding, you can choose to reduce the triggering damage to you and all allies within 30 feet by four times the spell level, rather than reducing the triggering damage to you or a single ally by four times the spell level.

Uzunjati: You know a surprising number of stories, and you weave them all together into a coherent narrative. When you use Uzunjati Recollection, you Recall Knowledge three times instead of once, each with a +2 circumstance bonus. You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your skill check for Uzunjati Storytelling from the captivating combined narrative.

ROLEPLAYING ACADEMIA

The academia subsystem is at its best when the players and GM use the opportunity as a backdrop for roleplaying events and occurrences that highlight the reality of life at a magic academy, rather than just quickly rolling some skill checks and tallying up branch levels. Maybe one hero has to go on a hunt for a book that should be available in the library but has been lent out multiple times, while another must convince a straitlaced professor to allow them to conduct a potentially dangerous experiment. For more guidance on ideas for downtime events and how to intersperse them throughout downtime, refer to pages 22 and 25 of the *Gamemastery Guide*.

STUDENTS OF THE MAGAAMBYA

Lessons are important, but the school experience is also defined by the peers who study alongside one another. This article presents nine fellow students of the Magaambya who learn and grow with the heroes. Although most of these students have roles in "Kindled Magic" and later adventures, feel free to develop attachments, rivalries, or even romances as matches your group's interests and comfort.

Each student is presented with a short stat block that details their branch, hobbies, quirks, and so on. Each also presents two important benefits. The first, Classroom Advantage, benefits parties who are good friends with the student when they attempt the Study or Cram downtime activities (page 63) in certain classes or circumstances, as specified in the student's entry. The second benefit is an uncommon rules item, such as a spell, which the heroes gain access to once they've befriended the student. It's up to you how close the relationship must be before the heroes gain these benefits and how they can build a friendship with a student, whether by improving a student's attitude mechanically with successful Diplomacy checks, performing good deeds or favors throughout the campaign, or merely showing genuine interest and friendship.

Anchor Root

ANCHOR ROOT

N | female | ant gnoll | bonekeeper-in-training
Branch: Rain-Scribes
Classroom Advantage: Treat your critical failures when you Study for Rain-Scribe classes as failures instead.
Specialty Item: *rhythm bone* (page 76)
Notable Skills: Nature, Occultism, Stealth, Survival
Hobbies: sand sculptures, raising beetles, musical curation
Most Well Known For: interrupting herself halfway through a presentation to exclaim "I'm sorry, I'm boring you" and running out of the room crying
Strangest Quirk: uses a chicken tied to a stick to keep her room free of unwanted bugs
Common Associates: Esi (working on music playback magic), Noxolo (scavenging bones), Tzeniwe (stress baking)

Anchor Root is an ant gnoll, a 3-foot-tall humanoid who resembles an aardwolf more than a deadly carnivore. She hails from the small Redridge clan, several weeks' travel south-west from the Magaambya. Her clan has been in decline for several decades, with important storytellers and religious leaders dying before suitable replacements could be trained. Anchor Root is the only child in the clan with the potential talent to replace Redridge's aging bonekeeper. Anchor Root's entire family has placed their hopes on the young gnoll—unfortunately, Anchor Root's temperament is ill-suited to such pressure. Though she has always had issues with anxiety, the expectations currently placed on her shoulders have left her in a constant state of panic. The slightest flaw in her work or actions, whether real or perceived, can leave Anchor Root a devastated wreck for days.

Anchor Root takes her role as bonekeeper-in-training very seriously, even though she isn't sure she's up to the task. She is always on the lookout for the bones of worthy creatures—gnolls or otherwise—that can be symbolically adopted by her troubled clan to serve as spiritual mentors and protectors. The gnoll also has a hobby of anonymously recording music played around the city and then working with other students to play back the music on campus for others to hear.

CHIZIRE

CN | male | catfolk | slacker
Branch: Cascade Bearers
Classroom Advantage: You don't get tired after you Cram for Cascade Bearer classes.
Specialty Spell: *verminous lure* (page 76)
Notable Skills: Crafting, Deception, Diplomacy, Nature
Hobbies: brewing, engineering, finding new and exciting ways to avoid work
Most Well Known For: building a complete moonshine still in his dorm room from scrap
Strangest Quirk: always knowing the answer when called on despite visibly sleeping through class
Common Associates: Haibram (drinking partner), Ignaci (brewing experimental elixirs), Mariama (brewing weird liquors), Okoro (gaming group)

Chizire

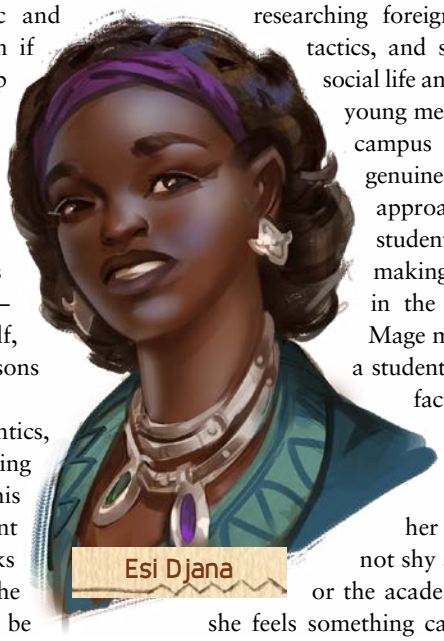
Chizire spent most of his youth in Kibwe unable to read, no matter how many books he was given or how many lessons were drilled into his head. By the time a visiting scholar encountered Chizire and recognized the youth was dyslexic, Chizire had already embraced the role of slacker and screw-up that had been thrust upon him. Despite this, Chizire's keen ability to teach himself magic and science caught the scholar's eye, even if the catfolk mostly used his gifts to keep slugs out of his fermentation barrels.

Chizire thrives at the Magaambya, though he often uses his intelligence for disruptive jokes, complex pranks, and other hijinks disapproved of by the faculty. He infuriates most of his mentors—and some of the students—by refusing to make anything of himself, despite clearly understanding the lessons better than many of his peers.

Chizire is known for his daring antics, such as infiltrating the kitchen or stealing magic items from campus, but his ultimate goal for the year is to enchant one of Nantambu's 10 pillar landmarks to tell bawdy jokes. Getting past all the magical wards on the pillars would be an incredible challenge, but Chizire thinks he can manage it with a bit of help, provided no one snitches on him to the teachers.

ESI DJANA

LG | female | human | ace student
Branch: Tempest-Sun Mages
Classroom Advantage: Treat your successes to Study for Tempest-Sun Mage classes as critical successes instead.
Specialty Spell: *impeccable flow* (page 76)
Notable Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Diplomacy, Society
Hobbies: university administration, campus exploration, book printing, book binding, sports, tactical wargames, fashion contests
Most Well Known For: once spent 15 straight minutes reciting different synonyms for "wrong" to make a point in an argument
Strangest Quirk: leaving baubles at magically derived coordinates for others to find
Common Associates: Anchor Root (working on musical playback magic), Haibram and Mariama (sparring partners), Okoro (exercise partner), Tzeniwe (babysitting)


Esi Djana

Every school has its star students, and anyone who knows Esi Djana knows that she's one of them. A Nantambu native, Esi engages the academy with an energy few can match. On any given day, Esi can be found organizing students for study groups and extracurricular activities, commanding the field for several of Nantambu's sports teams, independently researching foreign policy and military defense tactics, and still finding time for an active social life and dates with similarly ambitious young men. Esi is also known for around campus being kind, passionate, and genuine, going out of her way to approach shier or more anxious students who seem to have trouble making friends. Determined to follow in the footsteps of her Tempest-Sun Mage mother, whom she idolizes, Esi is a student who is clearly going places—a fact that attracts admirers, detractors, and opportunists in equal measure.

Esi's obstacles stem from her strengths. The young woman is not shy about challenging her teachers, or the academy administration itself, when she feels something can be done better. While some teachers encourage her spirited initiative (Takulu Ot perhaps most of all), others can be dismissive or outright hostile.

HAIBRAM THODJA

CG | male | dwarf | daredevil
Branch: Rain-Scribes
Classroom Advantage: When you Cram for Rain-Scribe classes, you can Study three times rather than twice.
Specialty Spell: *airburst* (page 76)
Notable Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Intimidation, Survival
Hobbies: recreational combat, cloud-watching, hang-gliding, pyromania
Most Well Known For: jumping off a three-story building to win a game of tag
Strangest Quirk: constantly found at the scene of fires that are actually never his fault
Common Associates: Chizire (drinking partner), Esi and Mariama (sparring partners)

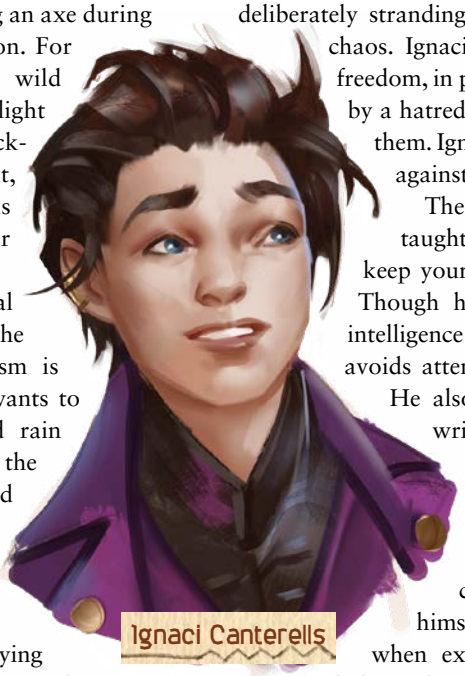
Haibram Thodja

Haibram's philosophy in life could be summed up as "go hard or go home." Though on the whole a friendly person, the Mbe'ke dwarf approaches anything resembling a competition with perhaps a little too much enthusiasm. While most of his idiosyncrasies are harmless, such as entering footraces in full battle armor, others demonstrate a rash impulsiveness, such as the time he leapt out brandishing an axe during an Uzunjati scary story competition. For those who aren't put off by his wild antics, Haibram can be the highlight of any party. Whether it's rock-climbing, rooftop races at midnight, or igniting colorful explosives, his exploits almost always make for interesting stories.

Though Haibram's natural magical mastery is focused on the element of air, his true enthusiasm is fire. It's an open secret Haibram wants to join the Tempest-Sun Mages and rain destruction down on his foes, but the branch's obligation to defend (and thus remain near) the Magaambya has left him unwilling to commit. For now, he satisfies himself with learning how to survive and thrive in any circumstances by studying under the Rain-Scribes. He skillfully combines physical combat with magic, using wind to dart across the battlefield or add hurricane force to thrown mambeles and swung clubs.

IGNACI CANTERELLS

N | male | human | thaumaturge
Branch: Emerald Boughs
Classroom Advantage: When you Cram for Emerald Boughs classes, treat your critical failures as failures instead.
Specialty Formula: forgetful ink (page 75)
Notable Skills: Crafting, Society, Stealth, Thievery
Hobbies: cryptography, high fashion, covert explorations
Most Well Known For: being easily swayed into bad decisions by attractive men
Strangest Quirk: starting his assignments over from the beginning every time he makes a mistake
Common Associates: Chizire (brewing experimental elixirs), Noxolo and Tzeniwe (sewing clothing), Okoro (cleaning house in card games, being talked into bad decisions)


Ignaci Canterells

Born in the colony of Sargava before it became the nation of Vidrian, Ignaci earned his parents' disapproval through the company he kept—rebellious youths, disaffected soldiers, and the native Mwangi populace. This minor rebellion proved enough for Ignaci's colonist family to abandon him at the start of the Vidric Revolution, deliberately stranding the teenager amid the violent chaos. Ignaci joined the fight for Vidrian's freedom, in part for justice but mainly driven by a hatred of his family and everyone like them. Ignaci hopes to one day aid Vidrian against foreign interests.

The trauma of these experiences taught Ignaci three lessons: shut up, keep your head down, and trust no one. Though his work ethic, politeness, and intelligence all impress his teachers, he avoids attention and has no close friends. He also remains incredibly paranoid, writing all of his study notes in a secret code.

Ignaci spends most of his free time stealthily exploring the school's nooks and crannies, leaving coded notes to himself in an ink that is visible only when exposed to a special alchemical light. Unknown to him, other students have discovered these notes, mistaken them for something more significant, and formed a small group called the Cryptic Circle that is dedicated to solving them.

MARIAMA KEITANA

CN | female | human | chaos magnet
Branch: Cascade Bearers
Classroom Advantage: You can reroll a check to Study for a Cascade Bearer class; this is a fortune effect.
Specialty Magic: Lesson of Calamity (page 75)
Notable Skills: Deception, Intimidation, Occultism, Religion
Hobbies: combat theory, occult lore, linguistics
Most Well Known For: summoning a devil on accident during a complex mathematical proof
Strangest Quirk: knows swear words in almost every language on Golarion
Common Associates: Chizire (brewing weird liquors), Okoro (board games), Esi and Haibram (sparring partners)

Mariama Keitana

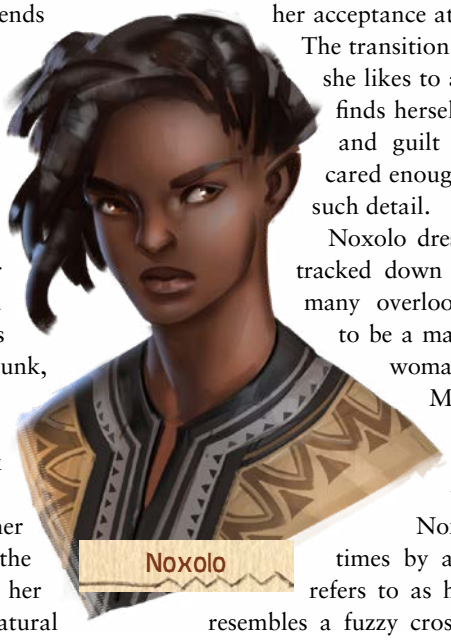
Teachers at the Magaambya tactfully describe Mariama as a student with an "interesting" personality. Undeniably a knowledgeable occultist and accomplished spellcaster, the young woman falters between responsibility and unreliability with infuriating frequency. Her attitude likewise flips between unbearable kindness to her friends and outright viciousness to her foes.

Mariama lives the kind of life that even storytellers might consider unrealistic, with wildly fluctuating luck and outlandish events frequently plaguing her. She likes to tell stories that are even more unbelievable, leaving her fellows to wonder whether Mariama is cursed, blessed, or just a pathological liar. To date, Mariama has nearly started a cult by accident while drunk, been subjected to school discipline for selling curses, and had her heirloom magical staff disintegrated by a freak bolt of lightning.

Mariama can rapidly piece together disparate clues, but her focus on the occult and the exceptional often leads her astray. She's quick to proclaim supernatural influence where there is none, such as accusing fey for crop failures when quelea birds are to blame. Yet when uncanny forces truly are at work, Mariama's insights are frighteningly accurate.

NOXOLO

LN | female | human | augur
Branch: Uzunjati
Classroom Advantage: Treat your critical failures to Study in Uzunjati classes as failures instead.
Specialty Spell: *grave impressions* (page 77)
Notable Skills: Deception, Medicine, Performance, Religion
Hobbies: dance, high fashion, kite-flying, watching motes of dust float through the air
Most Well Known For: pausing to dance and sing about what she's doing when excited
Strangest Quirk: always uses murder in her hypothetical examples
Common Associates: Anchor Root (scavenging bones), Ignaci and Tzeniwe (discussing fashion)


Noxolo

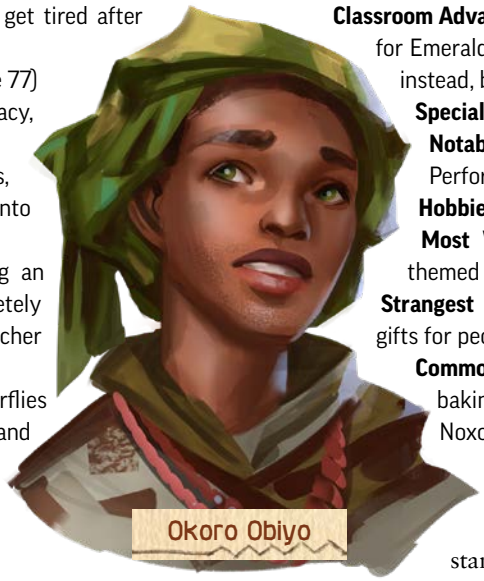
Noxolo fled from her home to escape her overbearing family, who had planned out every aspect of her life. Whispers from dead birds and cow bones told her she could find freedom at the Magaambya, and so she went, not knowing what to expect. What she discovered was a far bigger world than she'd ever dreamt possible, and a chance to unravel the mysteries of the strange whispers she hears. Though highly prone to spacing out during lectures, Noxolo does her best not to take her acceptance at the Magaambya for granted. The transition has been rougher on her than she likes to admit, however, and she often finds herself wracked with homesickness and guilt for leaving the family who cared enough about her to plan her life in such detail.

Noxolo dressed as a man to avoid being tracked down while traveling, noticing that many overlooked someone who appeared to be a man if they were searching for a woman. By the time she reached the Magaambya, Noxolo found she preferred her new look and has begun to experiment with various fashions and hairstyles.

Noxolo is accompanied at all times by a bizarre, 2-foot-long pet she refers to as her "snabble," a creature that resembles a fuzzy cross between a crocodile and a bear cub. The creature has attracted more than its fair share of curious scholars, though Noxolo herself seems uninterested in what sort of creature it truly is or where it originally came from.

OKORO OBIYO

NG | male | human | researcher
Branch: Uzunjati
Classroom Advantage: You don't get tired after you Cram for Uzunjati classes.
Specialty Spell: *mind games* (page 77)
Notable Skills: Athletics, Diplomacy, Performance, Occultism
Hobbies: sports, board games, card games, deep research dives into random topics
Most Well Known For: preparing an 8-hour presentation on a completely different topic than the teacher assigned
Strangest Quirk: is scared of butterflies
Common Associates: Chizire and Mariama (gaming group), Esi (exercise partner), Ignaci (talking him into bad decisions)


Okoro Obiyo

A bright-eyed and excitable Bonuwat youth from Senghor, Okoro's love of eclectic research got him shipped off to the Magaambya to hone his talents and, some joke, to spare everyone else in Senghor from his enthusiasm. To Okoro, whatever has caught his interest for the month is the most exciting thing ever, and nothing can pry his attention and passion away from it. The self-directed nature of the Magaambya's classes has allowed him to pursue these interests more often than a typical university, and Okoro is considered one of the top students at his rank. His relentless positivity in the face of challenges, setbacks, and the occasional near-death experience have likewise gained him many friends. Though his confidence and gusto can occasionally lead him to being shortsighted and even self-centered, most find him to be a bright spot in a complicated world.

Okoro is a natural athlete who excelled at aquatic sports in Senghor and now enjoys footraces and kickball in Nantambu. He also possesses a truly staggering collection of board games and card decks, and periodically drags fellow students into playing them. His most successful endeavor is his biweekly game night, often compete for favors, magical formulas, or campus secrets.

STRANDS-OF-GLOWING-DAWN TZENIWE

NG | female | anadi | dreamweaver
Branch: Emerald Boughs
Classroom Advantage: Treat your successes to Study for Emerald Boughs classes as critical successes instead, but this doesn't apply when you Cram.
Specialty Spell: *friendfetch* (page 77)
Notable Skills: Crafting, Diplomacy, Performance, Society
Hobbies: bird-watching, baking, high fashion
Most Well Known For: having elaborate themed outfits for every class
Strangest Quirk: leaving hidden anonymous gifts for people
Common Associates: Anchor Root (stress baking), Esi (babysitting), Ignaci and Noxolo (weaving cloth and sewing clothing)

Strands-of-Glowing-Dawn Tzeniwe

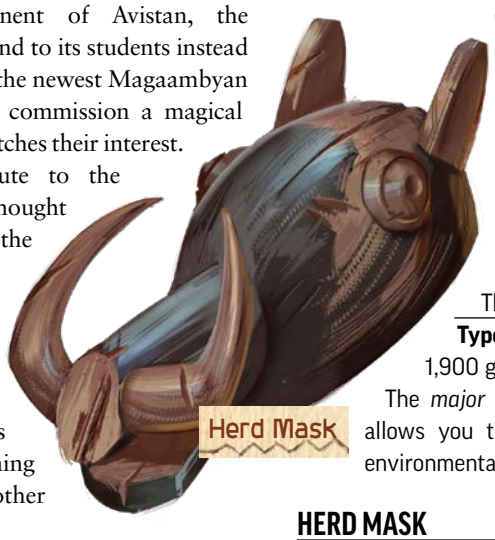
A middle-aged woman who stands out among her younger peers, Tzeniwe sought the Magaambya later in life to gain an advanced education in the hopes of passing that education down to her children. A shy and awkward person from the nation of Nurvatcha, Tzeniwe knows that many in the Mwangi Expanse mistakenly believe shapeshifting anadis to be humans who turn into hideous spider creatures at night. Though the Magaambya possess's a much more enlightened view on anadis, Tzeniwe is still painfully aware that many humanoids are terrified of spiders. Indeed, she's more forgiving of repulsed reactions than her friends think she should be. Possessing a cooperative and generous nature, Tzeniwe often leaves her peers small gifts to make them comfortable, such as cups of chilled tea, delicious snacks, or even soft scarves and kaftans.

Despite her introversion, Tzeniwe's two toddlers constantly pull her out of her shell. Named Zachva and Zanvi, the rambunctious pair have no qualms about jumping around in spider form, pestering other students, or climbing into places they shouldn't. Academy students have become impressed with Tzeniwe's ability to lasso her children from over 50 paces to retrieve them. Though Tzeniwe usually carries them with her during classes, a large spiderling on her back and a human child on one knee, she often asks others to watch them when the twins refuse to behave.

ADVENTURE TOOLBOX

As the oldest magical school in the Inner Sea region, the Magaambya boasts a wide collection of powerful items and unusual spells. Unlike many of its academic counterparts on the continent of Avistan, the Magaambya also offers a stipend to its students instead of requiring tuition fees. Even the newest Magaambyan initiate can usually afford to commission a magical item or purchase a spell that catches their interest. This support helps contribute to the Magaambya's diversity of thought and allows it to remain at the forefront of magical research.

The following new rules options are available to the heroes in their role as students of the Magaambya, including uncommon rules they might uncover by deepening their relationships with other students at the school.


Herd Mask

Magical Masks

One of the benefits granted to full-fledged Attendants is the right to wear a Magaambyan mask, or to have their personal mask acknowledged by the Magaambya. Tradition dictates that these creations be carved into the shape of an animal. As a mage continues to wear the mask, the object gradually gains an "imprint" of its owner's true spiritual face. In addition to forming their masks into familiars (*Lost Omens Character Guide* 101), Magaambyans often place useful enchantments on their masks to aid them in their more dangerous ventures.

GOZ MASK ITEM 2+

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

Originally designed by a fanatical sect of Gozren priests, *goz masks* were designed to help navigate the area around the Eye of Abendego. The masks couldn't contend with the might of the storm, but they remain in use by people all around the Mwangi Expanse. These masks are typically made of wood and crafted to sport round, exaggerated features.

Activate ❖ Interact; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You ignore concealment caused by fog, smoke, and other obscuring vapors for 1 minute.

Type *goz mask*; **Level** 2; **Price** 30 gp

Type *greater goz mask*; **Level** 6; **Price** 240 gp

The effect lasts for 10 minutes.

Type *major goz mask*; **Level** 12; **Price** 1,900 gp

The *major goz mask* gives you darkvision and allows you to ignore all concealment from any environmental effects for 1 hour.

HERD MASK ITEM 6

UNCOMMON CONJURATION INVESTED MAGICAL TELEPORTATION

Price 210 gp

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

All *herd masks* are linked to at least one other *herd mask* and are usually sold in sets of multiple masks. Linked *herd masks* look similar to one another, with only the slightest of differences to tell them apart.

Activate ❖❖ envision; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You swap locations with another creature wearing a linked *herd mask* within 100 feet. If you and the creature you swapped with are disguised as each other, other creatures gain an immediate Perception check against the lower of your or the other wearer's Deception DCs to Impersonate each other. On a failure, they don't realize the swap occurred.

Craft Requirements Supply a casting of *dimension door*. You can link a *herd mask* you create to another *herd mask* in your possession when you finish crafting it, which causes it to be linked to the chosen mask as well as all other *herd masks* that are also linked to the chosen mask.

MASK OF THE CURSED EYE ITEM 8

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL NECROMANCY

Price 475 gp

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

These masks are always decorated with at least one wide, staring eye.

The first time each day a creature on your plane that you can't perceive targets you with a divination spell, the creature must attempt a DC 24 Will save. This effect is automatic and does not require you to Activate the item.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is unaffected. You know you've been targeted with a divination spell, but the mask gives you no additional information.

Failure The creature is sickened 1 and dazzled for 1 minute. You know you've been targeted with a divination spell, but the mask gives you no additional information.

Critical Failure The creature is sickened 2 and dazzled for 10 minutes, and the spell is disrupted. You gain a brief mental glimpse of the triggering creature and learn its approximate distance and direction.

Mask of the Cursed Eye

MASK OF MERCY ITEM 4

UNCOMMON FORTUNE INVESTED MAGICAL NECROMANCY

Price 100 gp

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

This porcelain or alabaster mask portrays an angelic visage of kindness and mercy.

Activate ◈ envision (fortune); **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** You are about to roll a variable number of Hit Points you restore from an action with the healing trait; **Effect** Roll twice to determine the number of Hit Points you restore and take the higher result.

Shapespeak Mask

PSYCHOPOMP MASK ITEM 1

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL NECROMANCY

Price 5 gp

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

These minor magic items are painted to resemble your face, or some metaphorical depiction thereof, to encourage the ushers of death to take the mask in your place. If you begin your turn with a dying value of 3 or greater, instead of making your recovery check, you lose the dying condition but remain unconscious at 0 Hit Points. The mask then cracks in half and is destroyed. The psychopomps won't be so easily fooled again—you are temporarily immune to the effects of any *psychopomp mask* for 1 year.

RHINOCEROS MASK ITEM 4+

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

Covered with thick armor and bearing a thicker horn, this face mask grants you increased momentum. If you Stride at least 10 feet, your next melee Strike before the end of your turn ignores the Hardness of objects with a Hardness of 5 or less. If the object has more than Hardness 5, the mask grants no benefit.

Type *rhinoceros mask*; **Level** 4; **Price** 90 gp

Type *greater rhinoceros mask*; **Level** 8; **Price** 425 gp

Your melee Strikes ignore the Hardness of objects with a Hardness of 10 or less.

SHAPESPEAK MASK ITEM 4

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Price 80 gp

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** –

This simple wooden mask is carved into the shape of an animal, usually tailored to a species of beast that the user favors. While wearing this mask, you can speak even when polymorphed into an animal. The *shapespeak mask* does not otherwise remove any limitations, such as the inability to cast spells when transformed.

SKITTERING MASK ITEM 2+

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** 1

This carved wooden full-head mask sports several holes along each side of the face. The first time each day that you begin your turn unconscious and within 25 feet of an enemy, metallic insect legs emerge from the holes in the mask and Step 5 feet away from the nearest enemy, dragging your body along with the mask. If more than one enemy is equidistant, the mask Steps away from one of them at random. The mask possesses no special senses and does not react to hidden or undetected enemies, nor can it distinguish that a creature not acting openly hostile is an enemy.

Type *skittering mask*; **Level** 2; **Price** 30 gp

Type *greater skittering mask*; **Level** 8; **Price** 500 gp

The mask Steps 15 feet instead of 5 feet, and for 1 minute,

each time you begin your turn unconscious and within 25 feet of an enemy, the mask Steps 15 feet away from the nearest enemy again. An ally can signal the mask with a single action, which has the auditory and concentrate traits. If the mask hears the signal, it attempts to move you towards that ally when it Steps away from the nearest enemy.

TLIL MASK ITEM 5+

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Usage worn mask; **Bulk** L

Colorful, beaded *tlil masks* are most commonly found on the distant continent of Arcadia, but trade between the two regions means that they can be found in the Mwangi Expanse as curiosities. These masks usually bear floral patterns and attune your senses to plants of all varieties.

Activate ❖ envision; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** Your vision up to 60 feet sees through small amounts of living plant matter as though it were transparent. While this effect is active, creatures can't be concealed from you due to living plants, such as small trees, vines, and grass. This also prevents them from Hiding or Sneaking past you using only living plants for concealment or cover. Other than the inability to use the cover to Hide or Sneak, this ability doesn't prevent plants from providing cover to creatures or blocking line of effect. It also doesn't allow you to see through dead plant matter, such as the wooden walls of a building, or thick plant matter, such as the walls of a dungeon built entirely inside an enormous living tree. The effect lasts for 1 minute.

Type *tlil mask*; **Level** 5; **Price** 30 gp

Type *greater tlil mask*; **Level** 9; **Price** 240 gp

The effect lasts for 10 minutes.

Specialty Magic

Every student at the Magaambya has their own unique talents, and one purpose of the school is to allow students to discover these skills and hone them on their own terms. The following magical and alchemical options were all developed by the Magaambyan student NPCs. Heroes who befriend the relevant student (as explained on page 67) receive access to the uncommon option that the student knows.

ALCHEMICAL ITEM

Ignaci Canterells maintains a devotion to alchemy in his spare time. A hero who befriends Ignaci might be able to convince him to share the formula for his special ink, inspired by a famous Chelaxian play in which a scheming murderer hides poison on the pages of a book.

FORGETFUL INK ITEM 6

UNCOMMON ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE CONTACT POISON

Price 32 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L

Activate ❖ Interact

Used to write secret messages, a single dose of forgetful ink is enough to pen a page of text, often with flourishes extending to the page's edges. Anyone handling the page is exposed to the poison. This includes casual reading, unless the reader specifically takes precautions not to physically touch it. Unlike other poisons, forgetful ink retains its potency for one year, regardless of the number of victims exposed.

Saving Throw DC 20 Fortitude (secret); **Onset** 1 minute; **Stage 1** The reader forgets the contents of the writing, recalling it as blank or as inconsequential text.

LESSON

Most people don't trust Mariama Keita's erratic magic, but no one can deny that it's as unique as she is. A witch who befriends Mariama can select the lesson of calamity when a feat or other effect grants a basic lesson.

Lesson of Calamity (Uncommon): You gain the *stumbling curse* hex, and your familiar learns *ill omen* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 221).

STUMBLING CURSE FOCUS 1

UNCOMMON CURSE HEX TRANSMUTATION WITCH

Cast ❖ somatic

Range 60 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Reflex; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

With a twist of a finger, you send a creature careening on a haphazard trajectory. The target must attempt a Reflex save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes a –2 status penalty to Athletics and Acrobatics checks.

Failure As success, and each time the target Strides, it uses the first 5 feet of movement of the Stride to move 5 feet in a random direction (this is forced movement). This has no effect on a creature with only 5 feet of movement.

Critical Failure As failure, except you control the direction of the target's first 5 feet of movement of the Stride.

MAGIC ITEM

By persuading the spirit of a bone to listen and repeat, Anchor Root has enchanted this skeletal charm to record and play back sounds. Anchor Root typically uses her odd bone charms to record music, but more conniving minds might have other uses for them. A hero who befriends Anchor Root could receive (or learn how to make) the following magic item.

RHYTHM BONE ITEM 1

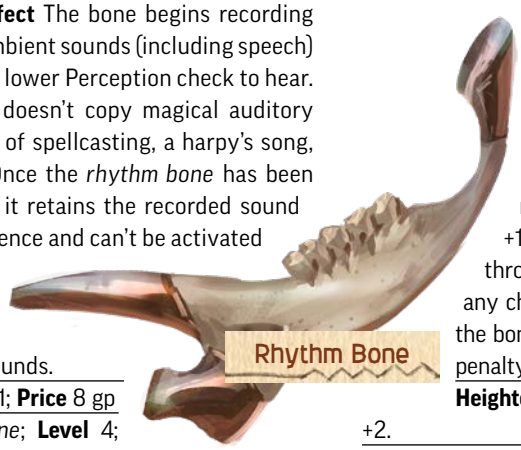
UNCOMMON AUDITORY MAGICAL

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

This small, enchanted bone (most often a jaw) is usually capped with metal at its ends. It's activated by striking it against a hard surface.

Activate ❖ Interact; **Effect** The bone begins recording the next 1 minute of ambient sounds (including speech) that require a DC 15 or lower Perception check to hear. The bone's recording doesn't copy magical auditory effects, such as those of spellcasting, a harpy's song, or a banshee's wail. Once the *rhythm bone* has been activated in this way, it retains the recorded sound for the rest of its existence and can't be activated this way again.

Activate ❖ Interact; **Effect** The bone replays its recorded sounds.



Type *rhythm bone*; **Level** 1; **Price** 8 gp

Type *greater rhythm bone*; **Level** 4; **Price** 64 gp

The magical bone records the next 10 minutes of ambient sounds that require a DC 20 or lower Perception check to hear.

Craft Requirements Supply a casting of *ghost sound*.

NEW SPELLS

Many students at the Magaambya have researched or independently developed unusual spells.

Chizire

Chizire rarely uses this spell for anything other than his own convenience.

VERMINOUS LURE SPELL 1

UNCOMMON OLFACTORY TRANSMUTATION

Traditions primal

Cast ❖❖ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature or object

Duration 10 minutes

Upon casting, the target emits a musk that's captivating to certain animals. Tiny animals and animal swarms of any size within range must attempt a Will save. On a failure, non-hostile animals or animal swarms try to touch the target. If hostile, such creatures choose to attack the target instead of other foes, if able to do so without spending additional actions or exposing themselves to additional danger.

Verminous lure doesn't change animals' attitudes towards the target and is easily overridden by more direct control, such as the Command an Animal action. Animals with imprecise sense can use their scent as a precise sense against the target.

Esi Djana

Esi has learned to channel the momentum of her actions into further success, though disrupting the flow becomes unusually jarring as a consequence.

IMPECCABLE FLOW SPELL 2

UNCOMMON DIVINATION LAWFUL

Traditions arcane, divine

Cast ❖❖ somatic, verbal

Duration 1 minute

You attune yourself to an underlying cosmic order to the world. While you remain in tune with this power, you gain a +1 status bonus to Perception checks, saving throws, and skill checks. If you critically fail any check while under the effects of this spell, the bonus ends and you instead have a –1 status penalty to all checks for the remaining duration.

Heightened (5th) The status bonus increases to +2.

Heightened (8th) The status bonus increases to +3.

Haibram Thodja

Never one for fine control, Haibrim's air magic bursts forth from his body at wild, unpredictable angles.

AIRBURST SPELL 1

UNCOMMON AIR EVOCATION

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ❖ verbal

Area 5-foot emanation; **Targets** all creatures and unattended objects in the area

Saving Throw Fortitude

A blast of wind wildly pushes everything nearby. Unattended objects of 1 Bulk or less are pushed 5 feet away from you. Large or smaller creatures must attempt a Fortitude save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes a –2 status penalty to checks made during its reactions until the end of your turn.

Failure As success, and the creature is pushed 5 feet away from you.

Critical Failure The creature is pushed 5 feet away from you and can't use reactions until the end of your turn.

Heightened (4th) Increase the area to a 10-foot emanation and increase the distance objects and creatures are pushed to 10 feet.

Noxolo

In contrast to her lively personality, Noxolo derives most of her insights from the dead. This spell imparts the macabre perspective that Noxolo experiences from time to time.

GRAVE IMPRESSIONS SPELL 2

UNCOMMON NECROMANCY

Traditions divine, occult
Cast 1 minute (somatic, verbal)
Range touch; **Targets** 1 corpse
Duration 10 minutes

You project a fragment of your senses into the corpse. While within 500 feet of the corpse (even if it's outside your line of sight or line of effect), you can see from where the target corpse had eyes using your normal visual senses, and you can hear from where the corpse had ears using your normal auditory senses. You can switch between your own vision and hearing, and the corpse's senses, with a single action that has the concentrate trait. If the corpse naturally lacked eyes or hearing organs in life, you cannot use that sense when using this spell. If the corpse is moved from its location, the spell ends.

Heightened (4th) The duration increases to 1 hour.
Heightened (6th) The duration lasts until the next time you make your daily preparations.

Okoro Obiyo

Always the game and strategy enthusiast, Okoro can use a simple game piece to trap an adversary in a magical challenge of wits.

MIND GAMES SPELL 2

UNCOMMON ENCHANTMENT MENTAL

Traditions arcane, occult
Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal; **Cost** 3 gp game piece focus
Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature
Saving Throw Will; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

You lock minds with the target, trying to mentally subdue them. The target must attempt a Will save. Each time you Sustain this Spell, the target attempts another Will save.

Critical Success You are stunned 1 and the spell ends.
Success The target is unaffected.
Failure The target is stunned 1.
Critical Failure The target is stunned 2.

Tzeniwe

Strands-of-Glowing-Dawn Tzeniwe can suggest many valuable uses for this spell. She most often employs it to corral her rambunctious children when they've gotten into danger or are pestering someone they shouldn't.

FRIENDFETCH SPELL 1

UNCOMMON EVOCATION FORCE

Traditions arcane, occult
Cast ◆◆ somatic, verbal
Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 or 2 willing creatures

You shoot out ephemeral, telekinetic strands that drag each target directly toward you, stopping in the closest unoccupied space to you in this path. This is forced movement.

ANADI ALLIES

Peaceful anadis easily integrate into human communities so long as they wear their humanoid shape. Anadi families coexist happily with humans, usually making their living as tailors, weavers, or trappers. All too often, however, anadis face social stigma upon revealing their true forms. Most choose to hide this form, sharing their secret only with trusted friends. Reclusive anadis remain in the wilderness and avoid other ancestries entirely, but they domesticate giant spiders as trained guardians or hunting animals.

Anadi

Anadis have three distinct forms—human, spider, and a beautiful but unnerving hybrid shape that is their true form. Despite their unsettling arachnid features, anadis are peaceful and form tight-knit communities.

ANADI SEEKER

Anadi seekers are knowledge seekers who often brave the outside world.

ANADI SEEKER — CREATURE 1

UNCOMMON | CG | MEDIUM | ANADI | HUMANOID

Perception +7

Languages Anadi, Common

Skills Acrobatics +6, Arcana +7, Athletics +4 (+6 to Climb in hybrid or spider form), Crafting +7 (+11 weaving), Nature +5, Occultism +7

Str +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** –1, **Int** +4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +0

Items sling (20 sling bullets)

AC 15; **Fort** +4, **Ref** +10, **Will** +7

HP 20

Speed 25 feet, climb 25 feet

Melee ❖ fangs +8 (finesse), **Damage** 1d6+1 piercing plus anadi venom

Ranged ❖ sling +8 (propulsive, range increment 50 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d6 bludgeoning

Anadi Venom (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 15 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and flat-footed (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage, flat-footed, and clumsy 1 (1 round)

Arcane Innate Spells DC 17; **1st** *color spray*, *magic missile*, *unseen servant*; **Cantrips (1st)** *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read aura*, *shield*

Change Shape ❖ (arcane, concentrate, polymorph, transmutation) The anadi changes into their hybrid, spider, or human form. The above statistics assume the anadi is in hybrid form. While in human form, the anadi seeker loses their climb Speed and can't use their fangs attack. When in spider form, they can't use weapons.

Spin Silk (concentrate, exploration, manipulate) By spending several minutes, an anadi can produce silk to craft items made of cloth. An anadi can produce enough silk in a day to craft a single garment.

Anadi Lurker

ANADI LURKER

These anadis lurkers combine their innate magical talents and wilderness lore to snare prey.

ANADI LURKER — CREATURE 3

UNCOMMON | CN | MEDIUM | ANADI | HUMANOID

Perception +11

Languages Anadi, Common

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +10 (+12 to Climb in hybrid or spider form), Crafting +5 (+9 weaving), Nature +7, Stealth +11, Survival +9

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

Items kukri, leather armor

AC 19; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +9

HP 45

Speed 25 feet, climb 25 feet
Melee ❖ fangs +12 (finesse), **Damage** 1d8+3 piercing plus anadi venom
Melee ❖ kukri +12 (agile, finesse, trip), **Damage** 1d6+3 slashing
Arcane Innate Spells DC 20; **2nd** *blur, web*; **1st** *color spray, illusory disguise, illusory object*; **Cantrips (2nd)** *daze, detect magic, mage hand, message*
Anadi Venom (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 18 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and flat-footed (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage, flat-footed, and clumsy 1 (1 round)
Change Shape ❖ (arcane, concentrate, polymorph, transmutation) As anadi seeker.
Sneak Attack The anadi lurker deals an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.
Spin Silk (concentrate, exploration, manipulate) As anadi seeker.

ANADI FATEWEAVER

The anadis manipulate the threads of fate as easily as they spin silk.

ANADI FATEWEAVER — CREATURE 5

UNCOMMON | NG | MEDIUM | ANADI | HUMANOID

Perception +14
Languages Anadi, Common
Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +11 (+15 to Climb in true or spider form), Crafting +9 (+13 weaving), Medicine +12, Nature +14, Survival +12
Str +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +1
Items composite shortbow (20 arrows), hide armor, shortsword

AC 21; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15
HP 75
Fate's Threads ↷ (fortune) **Frequency** three times per day; **Trigger** An ally within 30 feet of the anadi fateweaver that they can see makes a skill check or a saving throw; **Effect** The creature rerolls the triggering check and takes the new result.

Speed 25 feet, climb 25 feet
Melee fangs +13 (finesse), **Damage** 2d6+6 plus anadi venom
Melee shortsword +13 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d6+6 piercing
Ranged composite shortbow +13 (deadly d10, propulsive, range increment 60 feet, reload 0), **Damage** 1d6+1 piercing
Arcane Spontaneous Spells DC 23, attack +15; **3rd** (2 slots) *hypnotic pattern, mind reading*; **2nd** (3 slots) *augury, invisibility, status*; **1st** (3 slots) *illusory object, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *daze, ghost sound, produce flame, shield*
Arcane Innate Spells DC 23; **2nd** *blur, web*; **1st** *color spray, mending, unseen servant*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, message*
Rituals DC 23; *arcane weaving* (see sidebar)
Anadi Venom (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 20 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and flat-footed (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage, flat-footed, and clumsy 1 (1 round)
Change Shape ❖ (arcane, concentrate, polymorph, transmutation) As anadi seeker.
Spin Silk (concentrate, exploration, manipulate) As anadi seeker.

ARCANE WEAVING — RITUAL 3

UNCOMMON | DIVINATION

Cast 1 day; **Cost** rare silks worth a total value of 20 gp × the spell level; **Secondary Casters** 1
Primary Check Arcana or Occultism (expert); **Secondary Checks** Arcana, Crafting, or Occultism

You and the secondary casters weave together spells (and, if anadis, silk) in a complex ritual that combines magical learning with art, allowing all the participants to share spells they know with one another.
Success You or any secondary caster can swap any spell in your spell repertoire for a spell in the spell repertoire of any other participant. This spell can't be a higher level than the ritual's level.
Failure None of the participants can swap spells.
Critical Failure As failure, and all participants are stupefied 1 for 24 hours and can't reduce their stupefied condition below 1 for 24 hours.

Anadi Fateweaver

HIVE MINDS

Bees communicate with each other using complex combinations of movement and pheromones. They can share detailed information, particularly related to food, water, and dangers. A queen bee doesn't have the ability to directly control members of her hive, but she guides the entire hive's activities and, when necessary, its relocation. Some druids have attempted to tap into this hive mind to control giant bee swarms, with limited success.

Bee, Giant

Like their smaller counterparts, giant bees are highly territorial. Many types of giant bees construct hives in caves or abandoned buildings and are quick to attack creatures that they deem a threat to the single fertile queen, who almost never leaves the hive. Although most common in warm biomes with lots of vegetation, some giant bees live in arid or cold environments and are solitary rather than hive-dwelling.

GIANT WORKER BEE

Worker bees, exclusively female, exist to feed and defend a hive. They have no qualms about sacrificing their lives when confronting intruders in their territory. Worker bees can fight singly, in small groups, or in swarms of dozens. Giant worker bees inject a venom with their stings, but this venom is rarely dangerous except to people sensitive to it. Other worker bees have no stinger and only bite their enemies.

GIANT WORKER BEE — CREATURE 0

N MEDIUM ANIMAL

Perception +5; darkvision

Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +5

Str +2, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** –5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** –1

AC 16; **Fort** +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3

HP 16; **Weaknesses** smoke susceptibility

Smoke Susceptibility A giant bee is slowed 1 for 1 round if it starts its turn in heavy smoke.

Speed 20 feet, fly 40 feet

Melee ❖ stinger +8 (deadly d6, finesse), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

Melee ❖ mandibles +8 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d4+2 piercing

GIANT MINING BEE

Giant mining bees have smaller bodies than giant worker bees but sometimes look larger due to their bristles, which resemble fur. They dig tunnels in sand, old wood, or stone to create nests and aggressively defend their lairs. Although not truly subterranean, giant mining bees are the most likely type of giant bees to be found underground, and some dwarf apiarists breed and train them.

GIANT MINING BEE — CREATURE 2

N SMALL ANIMAL

Perception +9; darkvision, tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +8

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** –5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

AC 18; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

HP 30; **Weaknesses** smoke susceptibility

Smoke Susceptibility As giant worker bee.

Speed 20 feet, burrow 10 feet, fly 40 feet

Melee ❖ stinger +11 (deadly d8), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

Melee ❖ mandibles +11 (agile), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

Giant Worker Bee

Fly, Giant Tsetse

This blood-sucking fly, the size of a horse, is widely despised as a harbinger of disease. Giant tsetse flies rarely congregate in large numbers, as they require gallons of blood each day to survive and thus crowd out or drive away rivals. Any group of creatures large enough to sustain multiple tsetse flies, such as a herd of dinosaurs, are quite likely to dominate the surrounding ecosystem on their own right.

A single giant tsetse fly can kill an entire herd of large animals within a few weeks, and those they don't kill often succumb to disease. When not hunting, giant tsetse flies prefer to hide in warm, dark places in forests and swamps, though they sometimes inhabit wet cave systems where prey is plentiful. The thrumming drone of their wings echoes around such cave systems, warning travelers familiar with the noise that the creatures are lairing nearby.

If food becomes scarce, a giant tsetse fly relocates elsewhere. They tend to follow rivers, animal tracks, or even roads to find food. This can take them to the fringes of civilization, where farms and ranches often have livestock that draws their attention. Settlers who find evidence of a giant tsetse fly should quickly seek out help to eliminate the pests, as all their animals (and, indeed, their families) are in jeopardy as long as the hungry insect is near.

Giant tsetse flies are only moderately smarter than ordinary flies, but some creatures have learned that they can train the creatures with frequent offerings of fresh blood. Giant tsetse flies might therefore be put to use as guardians or even mounts, but any potential trainer must take care not to become the voracious insect's next meal.

GIANT TSETSE FLY CREATURE 2

N LARGE ANIMAL

Perception +9; blood scent, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +5 (+9 to Hide)

Str +5, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** –5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** –5

Blood Scent The giant tsetse fly can detect blood within 30 feet. This is a precise sense against creatures within 30 feet that are bleeding.

AC 18; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

HP 30; **Immunities** disease, sleep

Speed 10 feet, fly 40 feet

Melee ❖ proboscis +11, **Damage** 1d6+5 piercing plus sleeping sickness

Blood Draw ❖ If the fly's last action was a successful proboscis Strike, it sucks its target's blood. The target takes 1d4 bleed damage (or 1d6 bleed damage if the target is an animal).

Sleeping Sickness (disease) **Saving Throw** DC 18 Fortitude; **Stage 1** enfeebled 1 (1 day); **Stage 2** enfeebled 1 and drained 1 (1 day); **Stage 3** unconscious (1 day); **Stage 4** as Stage 3 (1 day); **Stage 5** dead

TERRIBLE UNDERESTIMATION

A group of evil druids near Bloodcove captured and bred large tsetse flies to distill and empower the disease they spread. The underestimated the flies' ingenuity; the insects escaped and fed on several animals the druids had ritually prepared for sacrifice. The flies grew to their enormous size, killed the druids, and scattered into the surrounding fens.

GREMLIN SOCIETY

Most gremlin communities are egalitarian and cooperative, with little importance placed on familial ties compared to the bond of the community as a whole. Gremlin leaders are often the youngest and most annoying members of a group, achieving their positions by harassing an old leader into resigning or bullying the other gremlins into obedience. Gremlin adults encourage the children to explore by themselves, in hopes that they busy themselves harassing local mortals instead of creating trouble for the other gremlins.

Gremlin

Gremlins are malicious fey that infest and prey upon mortal communities. They live in tunnels, beneath eaves, and in abandoned buildings, stealing what they need from their neighbors instead of creating for themselves.

While there are gremlins of any and every gender, their appearances don't differ by gender. Young gremlins grow to maturity with alarming speed. Their entire nest raises them communally, though they are often encouraged to wander unsupervised and create mischief away from home instead of inside it.

SCRIT

Scrits are short, spindly gremlins with gray or beige leathery skin and a coat of smeared ink on their fingers. They make themselves the nightmare of many scribes and librarians, as they delight in nothing more than destroying books, scrolls, artwork, and other records or writing. The oils on a scrit's skin smears ink and renders text—even magical writing—completely illegible. Once they have smeared every page of a book, scrits devour them whole, absorbing the contents the book used to hold. After eating books they find stupid or funny, scrits hold skits for other gremlins which mock the mortal authors for the amusement of the other fey.

SCRIT **CREATURE 0**

UNCOMMON | CE | TINY | FEY | GREMLIN

Perception +6; darkvision

Languages Undercommon

Skills Athletics +5, Acrobatics +5, Deception +4, Stealth +7

Str +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** +2, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0

AC 16; **Fort** +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4

HP 18; **Weaknesses** cold iron 2

Speed 25 feet

Melee ❖ sticky fingers +7 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d4+1 piercing plus nasty ink

Primal Innate Spells DC 16, attack +8; **2nd** *speak with animals* (at will); **1st** *grease*; **Cantrips (1st)** *prestidigitation*

Eat Book ❖❖❖ A scrit can consume a book after smearing its pages to absorb its contents (it gains no benefit from consuming a book with pages smeared by another scrit). For 1 day after consuming the book, the scrit can make Recall Knowledge skill checks on the book's subject with a +4 item bonus, and it can speak and understand the languages the book was written in. If it Eats another Book, it replaces the benefits of the previous Eat Book.

Nasty Ink (poison) A scrit's fingers are perpetually covered in smeared ink from the writing it's destroyed. This ink mixes with its skin oils to create a disgusting, sticky poison. **Saving Throw** DC 14 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d4 poison damage and sickened 1 (1 round)

Smear Text ❖ The scrit rubs its fingers against one page of writing, smearing the

text and rendering it unreadable. The scrit can smear and destroy magical writing such as a *glyph of warding* or a *sigil* by succeeding at a counteract check (using the scrit's spell attack modifier) against the caster's DC.

GNAGRIF

Squat, surly, and perpetually covered in wet mud, gnagrifs are gremlins that infest and destroy homes. They possess sharklike faces and two sets of jaws, allowing them to open their mouths 180 degrees and clamp onto flat rocks and walls. They delight in keeping their presence hidden, chewing holes into walls and foundations that weaken structures but don't bring them down until their inhabitants slam their doors too hard or step in the wrong place. Soon as the unwitting victims spring the trap, the building collapses around them.

Like all fey, gnagrifs detest iron. Gnagrifs become obsessively vengeful if they accidentally swallow an iron nail or hinge, terrorizing families or whole villages for generations over the slight.

GNAGRIF — CREATURE 2

UNCOMMON | NE | TINY | FEY | GREMLIN

Perception +7; darkvision
Languages Undercommon
Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +6, Intimidation +6, Stealth +8, Survival +5
Str +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** –1, **Wis** –1, **Cha** +2
Items light hammer

AC 18; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5
HP 35; **Weaknesses** cold iron 3

Soften Stone ↷ **Trigger** A creature Strides or Steps into difficult terrain adjacent to the gnagrif; **Effect** The gnagrif gives the ground a hearty pound and it shifts beneath the triggering creature's feet. The triggering creature must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save or fall prone.

Speed 20 feet, burrow 10 feet, climb 10 feet
Melee ❖ light hammer +10 (agile), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning
Ranged ❖ light hammer +10 (agile, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning
Primal Innate Spells DC 16; **2nd** *shatter*, *speak with animals* (at will); **1st** *ant haul*, *feather fall*; **Cantrips (1st)** *prestidigitation*
Eat Rocks ❖ The gnagrif gnashes and tears at an object or structure, dealing 2d4+2 piercing damage and ignoring Hardness 2 or lower.
Lurk ❖❖ **Requirements** A structure made from stone or earth is within the gnagrif's reach; **Effect** The gnagrif partially melds with the stone. It Takes Cover in the stone and makes a Stealth check to Hide.
Rubble Stride A gnagrif ignores difficult terrain caused by rocks or rubble, including squares affected by their Stomp Around.
Stomp Around ❖ (move) The gnagrif huffs and stamps its feet, churning the ground around it. The square it is in and all unoccupied adjacent squares become difficult terrain.
Wrecker Whenever two or more gnagrifs use Eat Rocks on the same object or structure, the value of Hardness they can ignore increases by 1 for every gnagrif, to a maximum of Hardness 10.

GREMLIN PETS

Gremlins making their nests near mortals' homes inevitably encounter domesticated animals. Most gremlins can use their innate magical abilities to speak with animals, allowing them to bargain with pets and work animals to aid in terrorizing, stealing, or training them to harass their owners. Gremlins especially love to befriend cats, whom they rarely bother, instead bringing them into their pranks and schemes as coconspirators.

Gnagrif

SILVERFISH MOLTS

In an interesting twist to the pest's life cycle, some spellcasters incorporate giant silverfish moltings into their spellbooks and scrolls. These shed skins have the consistency of onionskin and are valuable due to the superstition that they contain residual magic from texts the silverfish consumed. Regardless of whether a silverfish molt has any intrinsic magical power, many tenured mages feel that proof of a book-devouring vermin's demise is worthy of a reward. Thus, such a trophy is guaranteed to fetch a tidy sum from the right buyer.

Silverfish

A common pest with a silvery carapace and an undulating, fishlike scuttle, the nocturnal silverfish infests homes and libraries throughout Golarion. These insects aren't typically dangerous, but their tendency to devour books and clothing often puts them at odds with larger creatures.

SILVERFISH SWARM

It's uncommon for silverfish to congregate in sufficient numbers to constitute a swarm, but forgotten libraries or similar out-of-the-way places might harbor a multitude of the voracious pests.

SILVERFISH SWARM — CREATURE –1

UNCOMMON | N | LARGE | ANIMAL | SWARM

Perception +5; darkvision

Skills Acrobatics +6, Stealth +4

Str –2, **Dex** +3, **Con** +0, **Int** –5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** –2

AC 13; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

HP 9; **Immunities** precision, swarm mind; **Weaknesses** area damage 2, splash damage 2; **Resistances** physical 2

Speed 40 feet, climb 20 feet

Swarming Bites ❖ Each enemy in the silverfish swarm's space takes 1d4 piercing damage (DC 14 basic Fortitude save). A creature that fails its save is sickened 1.

Voracious Consumption (1 minute) A silverfish swarm consumes up to 1 Bulk of paper, cloth, or similar material. It can consume up to 4 Bulk each day.

GIANT SILVERFISH

Some silverfish can grow as large as a pig, particularly in magic colleges and ancient vault-libraries, where they terrify hapless students and destroy precious tomes. Popular academic lore attributes their unusual size to a steady diet of spellbooks.

Giant Silverfish

GIANT SILVERFISH — CREATURE 0

UNCOMMON | N | SMALL | ANIMAL

Perception +8; darkvision

Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +4, Stealth +6

Str +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** –5, **Wis** +1, **Cha** –2

AC 15; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

HP 17

Wriggle ↷ **Trigger** A creature the giant silverfish can see targets it with an attack; **Effect** The giant silverfish gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack. After the attack resolves, the silverfish Steps.

Speed 40 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee ❖ mandibles +8, **Damage** 1d6+2 piercing

Voracious Consumption (1 minute) A giant silverfish consumes up to 1 Bulk of paper, cloth, or similar material. It can consume up to 8 Bulk each day.

Spellskein

Magic can be used for many purposes—creating objects, summoning creatures, and manipulating the elements. Usually when a ritual is cast, the outcome is reliable and predictable, but sometimes magic takes unexpected turns and a spell's energy lands in unintended places.

Spellskeins are scraps of fabric and paper infused with magic and brought to life. Once animated, they fold themselves into different shapes, changing both their appearance and their abilities based on their configuration. Spellskeins are only rarely aggressive and sometimes downright timid, but most have a playful streak.

Though they are often made accidentally out of magical leakage from rituals, some ritualists intentionally create spellskeins to serve as magical toys or animated decor. These planned spellskeins tend to be more obedient and less mischievous than their accidental counterparts, following commands or routines set by their creators even after said creators are long gone.

Scrap pieces torn from the body of a spellskein sometimes animate as ever smaller, more mischievous constructs, which usually dart away to hide until it's safe to come out and cause trouble.

SPELLSKEIN — CREATURE 0

UNCOMMON | N | TINY | CONSTRUCT

Perception +2; darkvision
Languages Common (can't speak any language)
Skills Acrobatics +5, Stealth +7
Str –1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** –4, **Wis** +0, **Cha** –5

AC 16; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4
HP 15; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

Speed 25 feet
Melee ❖ sharp edge +7 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d6+1 slashing
Collapse The spellskein can collapse flat to the ground to Hide; it can attempt to Hide even if it doesn't have any cover or concealment.
Crane Glide ❖ **Requirements** The spellskein is folded into its crane shape; **Effect** The spellskein gains a 25-foot fly Speed until the beginning of its next turn.
Frog Hop ❖❖ **Requirements** The spellskein is folded into its frog shape; **Effect** The spellskein Leaps 15 feet horizontally or vertically and gains a 10-foot climb Speed until the beginning of its next turn.
Lizard Frill ❖ (arcane, enchantment, fear, mental) **Requirements** The spellskein is folded into its lizard shape; **Effect** The spellskein puffs out its cloth frills and shakes them from side to side to look fierce. The first creature hit by its sharp edge Strike before the start of its next turn must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or become frightened 1 (frightened 2 on a critical failure).
Refold ❖ The spellskein folds itself into a crane, frog, or lizard shape, as it chooses.

MORE SHAPES

Some spellskeins have additional forms and abilities unique to the rituals that created them.

***Consecrate*:** Spellskeins created during *consecrate* rituals have a religious symbol form and can use the one-action activity anoint while in that form. One creature within 10 feet gains a +1 status bonus to saving throws for one round.

***Control Weather*:** Spellskeins created during *control weather* rituals have a storm cloud form and can gain the following attack in that form: **Ranged** ❖ zap +6 (range 30 feet), **Damage** 1d4+1 electricity.

***Heroes' Feast*:** Spellskeins created during *heroes' feast* rituals have a teapot form and can use the two-action activity serve tea while in that form. A living creature that drinks the tea with an Interact action regains 1d4 Hit Points and is temporarily immune for 10 minutes. Unconsumed tea disappears at the beginning of the spellskein's next turn.

Spellskein

KURSHKIN

Gremlin Trickster

Though her tiny stature and canine features would never suggest it, Kurshkin is an immortal trickster older than most members of the Magaambya. As a gremlin—a category of mischievous, malevolent fey—Kurshkin has spent most of her life with no real motives beyond childish cruelty. Like most pugwampi gremlins, Kurshkin delights in the misfortune of others, and especially enjoying making bad situations worse by introducing wasps, bleach, or other humiliating and painful substances to a situation where people are already suffering.

After decades of tormenting workers and artists on the outskirts of Nantambu, several members of the squabbling collective of gremlins that Kurshkin was a part of developed a grudge against one of the youths that often helped out around the city—an obnoxiously mellow and good-humored young man named Takulu Ot. The young man was a student at the Magaambya with a terrible habit of helping people keep a positive attitude in bad circumstances. In a display of uncharacteristic boldness, the gremlins ventured into the academy to enact their revenge on the youth and the entire school. They knew that historically, gremlins tended to eschew the academy, but they didn't know why. Kurshkin, in particular, considered herself far too clever to have anything to fear at the Magaambya. After all, the academy only held people, and people are fun to torment.

Unsurprisingly, the gremlins found they had bitten off more than they could chew in deciding to take on a university filled with mages. Kurshkin was one of the first "casualties" of the offensive—caught by a deft student, the pugwampi was stuffed in a sack, loaded onto an elephant, and was two weeks of travel away from Nantambu before she managed to chew her way out of her confinement.

By the time Kurshkin made it back to the Magaambya, all of her fellow gremlins were dead.

Though the pugwampi's first impulse was to run and hide, she was also paranoid that the killer would be coming for her next. Kurshkin began to spy on the campus, looking for any sign of a continued threat. In her vigil, she found herself paying attention to some of the magical lessons being taught at the school. After years of inadvertent osmosis, she even managed to develop a few new magical tricks of her own.

The Magaambya's philosophy of understanding others and overcoming differences worked in Kurshkin's favor. If a few teachers or staff members noticed a creature that would skitter off when spotted, and seemed to be doing no harm, they said nothing about it. Kurshkin's caution eventually waned to the point where she would risk a few pranks on students, but her fear of attracting attention meant these tricks were all effectively harmless, and many of the scholars considered the gremlin's mischief to be a good lesson to teach students some care. Whether or not this situation would have remained tenable on its own is debatable, but it unraveled as soon as the being known as Stone Ghost reached out to Kurshkin.

A strange creature that manifested from the rock of the Magaambya's walls, Stone Ghost was recruiting gremlins for his schemes against the university. He originally approached Kurshkin as a kindred spirit, promising a chance at revenge. When Kurshkin refused, citing what had happened to her own vengeful comrades, Stone Ghost revised his offer: obey, or Stone Ghost would kill her.

It quickly became apparent that Kurshkin was somehow the most competent among Stone Ghost's gathered gremlins, and she was happy to take the leadership position and heap abuse on her underlings. A firm believer in leading from the back, Kurshkin obeys Stone Ghost's orders by telling her fellows what to do while she remains safe and sound, far away from any blowback their malicious antics might incur.

Like most pugwampis, Kurshkin resembles a dog that has lost most of its fur to mange. Her head is too big for her body, and her eyes nearly seem to be popping out of their sockets. She has large, floppy ears but is mostly deaf. During her time at the Magaambya, her eyes have turned bright blue in color—a quirk that her fellow gremlins both mock and fear. Her clothing is unusually fine for a gremlin, due to her scavenging from the Magaambya's well-to-do students, and has become somewhat vain and fussy about what

she wears. She enjoys decorating herself with threads or scraps of cloth that have been ripped off of students by mischance due to her unlucky aura.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Kurshkin serves as a secondary villain to the adventure, a somewhat silly antagonist who can be dangerous nevertheless—if underestimated. Despite her sympathetic circumstances, she is still unrepentant in her malice.

In combat, Kurshkin relies on her unluck aura to keep her safe, darting close to foes and hoping the ensuring misfortune will cause them to deal more harm to each other than to her. If her enemies seem too competent, she's happy to abandon her subordinates to her foes' whims so that she can flee to safety.

Kurshkin is a petty sort of evil, the kind that delights in causing others misfortune because she thinks it's funny. While she's never done anything that warrants death by most human standards, it's undeniable that her presence and actions make people miserable and situations worse.

Her dislike of deadly violence is mainly due to cowardice and the fact that she finds corpses to be less entertaining than living victims. This doesn't mean she won't stick a sword on someone who makes her mad by spoiling her fun; she's done so many times before, and likely will again. Even if the heroes deal with Kurshkin without lethal measures, she still endeavors to slowly grind down everyone around her, one minor annoyance at a time.

KURSHKIN CREATURE 3

UNIQUE NE TINY FEY GREMLIN

Female pugwampi jinxer

Perception +10 (+2 to hear things); darkvision

Languages Common, Gnoll, Undercommon

Skills Arcana +8, Crafting +8, Deception +8, Nature +8, Stealth +11, Thievery +9 (+11 to Steal)

Str –2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** +1, **Wis** –1, **Cha** +3

Items shortbow (60 arrows), shortsword

AC 19; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +8

HP 50; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5

Collateral Damage ↷ **Trigger** A Strike critically misses Kurshkin; **Effect** Kurshkin redirects the strike to an adjacent creature. The attacker rerolls the Strike against that creature.

Unluck Aura (aura, divination, mental, misfortune, primal) 20 feet. Creatures other than animals, gremlins, and gnolls in the aura become extremely unlucky (DC 20 Will save; a creature must roll this Will save twice and take the worse result). On a successful save, the creature is temporarily immune to pugwampi unluck auras for 24 hours. On a failure, the creature must roll twice and take the worse result on all checks as long as it remains within the aura's emanation.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ❖ shortsword +12 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

Ranged ❖ shortbow +12 (deadly d10, magical, range increment 60 feet, reload 0), **Damage** 1d6 piercing

Primal Innate Spells DC 20; **2nd** *speak with animals* (at will); **1st** *gust of wind*, *spider sting*; **Cantrips (2nd)** *prestidigitation*

Lucky Stabs Kurshkin deals an additional 1d6 damage with her melee Strikes against creatures affected by her unluck aura.

Natural Thief When attacking with a finesse melee weapon, Kurshkin adds her Dexterity modifier to damage rolls instead of her Strength modifier.

STONE GHOST

Spite-Filled Apparition and Failed Student

As a young man, Uduak Basni seemed like a typical Magaambyan initiate. Born with a supernatural connection to the earth, he found himself drawn to the Magaambya. To the professors at the academy, Uduak was an obvious candidate for the school's education. He easily found a sponsor and was set upon his Perquisite to become a full-fledged attendant.

Yet Uduak had a selfish streak. The pull he felt toward the Magaambya quickly bred a sense of entitlement. Feeling that he was meant to be building his own skills at the academy, he felt resentful about the community service he felt was being forced upon him. He performed his tasks with little effort and little concern for the people he was supposedly helping. Cracks began to form in his mild demeanor, and he increasingly drew reprimands for acts of carelessness or petty cruelty. Everything came to a head when his cohort was tasked with removing a group of pugwampi gremlins that had started causing mischief within the academy walls. Ignoring the spirited discussions of his fellow initiates, Uduak used his magic to slaughter the gremlins like vermin.

The aftermath saw Uduak expelled from the school. It was the last straw in a long series of misdeeds, but the young man fixated on this one event, enraged that the school would rob him of his future over defending himself and his classmates from a group of mere pests. In his anger, he lashed out violently at the school and the teachers. His magic bounced off the ancient wards of the Magaambya like a pebble off a cliff, and the professors temporarily confined Uduak until the administration could decide what to do with him. Left to stew in his own resentment, Uduak ignored his guard's warning, drew on all of his strength, and attempted to shatter the spells that kept him imprisoned within his room.

Under predictable circumstances, Uduak's magic would have splashed futilely against the Magaambya's wards once more, leaving his efforts entirely impotent. Yet magic is never entirely predictable—or perhaps the murdered pugwampis got one last scrap of revenge. In an incredibly unlikely reaction, the Magaambya's wards rebounded onto Uduak with the full force of their power. So far as any teacher at the school could tell, this reaction evaporated Uduak on the spot.

The student that was Uduak was not gone, however, but found himself merged with the Magaambya's stone walls. The same wards that originally trapped him within the buildings now protected him from detection, and Uduak decided to use this to his advantage. He hid himself in an abandoned section of the school and began planning his vengeance. His first recruits to his cause were an assorted group of gremlins that snuck into the school with no clue as to the recent massacre of their kind. Through a series of promises and threats, the cursed student took command of the gremlins, considering it fitting that the initiators of his downfall would now serve him against the teachers who had so wronged him. The gremlins, impressed and fearful of their new leader's ability to move through stone walls, granted him a new moniker: Stone Ghost.

Stone Ghost resembles a young man with a body made out of chunks of stone, his faceted skin matching the blocks that make up the Magaambya campus. His hair and face are made of ruined mosaics, and his body is covered in fragmentary runes: the shattered remains of the magic wards that caused his current condition. With nothing to temper his cruelty, Stone Ghost is abusive both in and out of combat. During his spare time, he shifts through walls to steal important items, learn secrets, and ruin friendships.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Stone Ghost serves as the villain of this adventure. He's a spiteful and self-centered antagonist convinced he's been victimized and willing to take out his feelings on the vulnerable. Due to his fear of the Magaambyan teachers, he almost always targets weak and innocent school initiates or adjuncts, punishing them for their mere association with the professors. He has recently worked to corral the insects and other creatures—including gremlins—that have been mysteriously drawn to the school, waiting for the perfect moment to unleash them for his own ends. As his minions can't move about the academy as easily has he can, Stone

Ghost has set them to digging tunnels while he plans sabotage on a grand scale.

Stone Ghost isn't undead, but neither is he still living. His connection to elemental earth allows him to still take physical form, but in truth, he's closer to his new moniker in nature than he can understand or admit, even to himself. The former student is nothing more than a hateful will unmoored from a body, and the only way to free his tormented spirit to a peaceful afterlife is to destroy him.

STONE GHOST CREATURE 5

UNIQUE | NE | MEDIUM | HUMAN | HUMANOID | OREAD

Male human oread stone spirit

Perception +13

Languages Common, Gnoll, Terran

Skills Arcana +12, Athletics +12, Intimidation +12, Magaambya Lore +12, Nature +13, Stealth +11

Str +3, **Dex** +0, **Con** +4, **Int** +3, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +1

Items leather armor, *+1 morningstar*, sling (10 bullets)

AC 20; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +15

HP 40; **Resistances** all damage 5 (except force or *ghost touch*; double resistance vs. non-magical, stone, or effects with the earth trait)

Stone Spirit Stone Ghost can pass through objects made of stone or soil, including walls. When inside an object, Stone Ghost can't perceive, attack, or interact with anything outside the object, and if he starts his turn inside an object, he is slowed 1.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ❖ *morningstar* +15 (magical, versatile P), **Damage** 1d6+7 bludgeoning

Ranged ❖ sling +11 (propulsive, range increment 50 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d6+5 bludgeoning

Primal Prepared Spells DC 22, attack +14; **3rd** *earthbind*, *summon elemental* (earth only); **2nd** *darkvision*, *glitterdust*, *shatter*; **1st** *command* (animals only), *grease*, *pass without trace*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *know direction*, *shield*, *tanglefoot*

Entombing Grasp ❖❖ (earth, manipulate) **Requirements** A foe within Stone Ghost's reach is standing on stone or soil; **Effect** Stone Ghost briefly extends his intangibility to a foe and drags or pounds them into the earth. He makes an Athletics check against the target's Fortitude DC. On a success, the foe is planted waist-deep in the ground and is immobilized and flat-footed until it Escapes (DC 22). On a critical success, the foe is completely buried and must hold its breath until it is free or else start suffocating. A successful Escape returns the foe to its original square on the surface, or the closest unoccupied square.

Stone Ghost

TAKULU OT

Kindly Teacher of Incoming Students

Takulu was born in the scholarly town of Tunyani, a settlement dedicated to the worship of the Empyreal Lords of magic and knowledge. Due to protection agreements held with the Tempest-Sun Mages of Nantambu, Tunyani's people were afforded the luxury of scholarly focus, with no need for its youths to train as warriors or soldiers. Instead, custom dictated the eldest child of every family would be sent to the priests and become a theologian. Takulu, first born to his parents, arrived at the temples at the age of five. Though he clearly disliked the separation from the rest of his family, Takulu took to his initial lessons well, soon excelling in his studies beyond what even the most learned scholars of Tunyani could offer him. Recognizing their son would never be happy where he was, stifled in both mind and spirit, Takulu's parents invoked a different tradition—a gift of a sacred ibis went to the Empyreal scholars, and Takulu went to the Magaambya.

Takulu had a considerate and kind nature even as a youth, and he immediately took to the Magaambyan ideals of responsibility and community service. He impressed his teachers with his thoughtfulness and his almost-supernatural levels of calm when dealing with difficult situations. His friendly and accepting demeanor meant that Takulu often found himself making friends with the unpopular or less successful students, helping them overcome bullying, shyness, and other social challenges to excel. These efforts found him surrounded by loyal friends and grateful acquaintances as he advanced his academic career. A year after achieving Conversant rank, he married his wife, a talented glass artist living in Nantambu; their relationship remains quietly happy and unshakable to this day.

For over a decade, he was content, and this was enough. Yet as Takulu watched the next generation of Magaambya initiates work their way through their studies, he began to realize his beloved academy had flaws. The school was incredibly understanding of different methods of learning, but could be callous when it came to supporting students emotionally. The self-directed studies that had offered Takulu the freedom to pursue his own interests allowed similarly self-directed and ambitious students to flourish but left those less certain of their path in life adrift and lost. The Magaambya's teachers maintained informal schedules and often forced students to seek them out, considering the journey a valuable lesson, yet this method actively favored those with more social confidence. Recognizing that talented youths were being left behind by the Magaambya's practices, Takulu turned his research to a field that had often taken second place to other academic concerns at the university—the study of teaching itself.

Like many subjects at the Magaambya, several scholars had dabbled in this research, but their knowledge had never been aggregated or catalogued. Takulu began the slow process of testing these approaches and adding his own refinements. He volunteered to personally teach many of the new initiates, a task that was usually left up to older students. The scholar also continued to tutor students that failed to thrive, doing what he could to learn the best methods of organizing lessons to help the most people learn.

Imparting his knowledge to the rest of the Magaambya has been slow. Teachers who thrived under the self-guided tutelage of their mentors prefer things to remain as they are. Others approve of Takulu's goals but consider the implementation a project for him and his like-minded students, rather than something to be broadly embraced. For now, Takulu has satisfied his ambitions by making himself a resource to a generation of incoming initiates and by keeping notes on his process and observations with the same precision that he applies to all of his scholarly pursuits.

In addition to his knowledge of magic and mathematics, Takulu is a skilled diplomat, as he deals with irate students and reticent academics on a daily basis. He's also a very capable mbira player. When not teaching, he can be found watching birds on campus or out in the city of Nantambu, where he's usually accompanied by his wife.

Physically, Takulu is an average-looking man with a friendly smile. He wears clothing with crisp patterns

and happy colors, which somehow never have a wrinkle on them no matter what the teacher has been doing recently. He has a favored wooden staff that he almost always carries with him—a gift from a student, which sometimes sprouts a tiny fruit or attracts a brave songbird—and also carries or wears a small trinket in the shape of an anteater, as he has a well-known and innocent delight for the animals. His wholesome image often causes students to gossip about him, making up conspiracy theories of violent hobbies or a secret dark past, but there's no truth to these haphazard stories. Takulu really is everything he appears to be.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Takulu is the first impression of the Magaambya that this campaign offers, serving as a kindly mentor to the heroes while they are students and a reliable ally to them after they outgrow his guidance. Even-tempered and unbearably kind, Takulu can offer advice and help to heroes who are struggling, including being a mouthpiece for you to provide suggestions to players who are struggling to find their character's role in the campaign. Although he answers to Takulu when faculty members speak to him, he prefers that students call him "Teacher Ot." When not teaching, he can usually be found in his office on the top floor of the Heron Archives.

If placed into a dangerous situation, Takulu's first goal is to protect his students, then anyone else in the area who requires assistance. He isn't a violent man, nor is he very good at violence even if he tries, meaning any combat aid he might offer in the course of the Adventure Path is firmly relegated to a support role.

TAKULU OT CREATURE 4

UNIQUE LG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human Cascade Bearer teacher

Perception +11

Languages Amurrun, Common, Elven, Iruxi, Sylvan, Xanmba

Skills Academia Lore +13, Arcana +13, Diplomacy +11, Library Lore +11, Nature +9, Performance +11

Str –1, **Dex** +2, **Con** +1, **Int** +5, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +1

Items anteater mask, *potion of minor healing*, staff

AC 21; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +12

HP 60

Quick Lesson ↷ (auditory) **Trigger** An ally Takulu can see and who can hear Takulu makes a skill check or an attack roll; **Effect** Takulu grants the ally a +2 circumstance bonus to the triggering check.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ❖ staff +9 (two-hand d8), **Damage** 1d4+1 bludgeoning

Arcane Prepared Spells DC 21, attack +13; **2nd** *comprehend language*, *glitterdust*, *see invisibility*; **1st** *heal*, *mending*, *ray of enfeeblement*; **Cantrips (2nd)** *daze*, *detect magic*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read aura*

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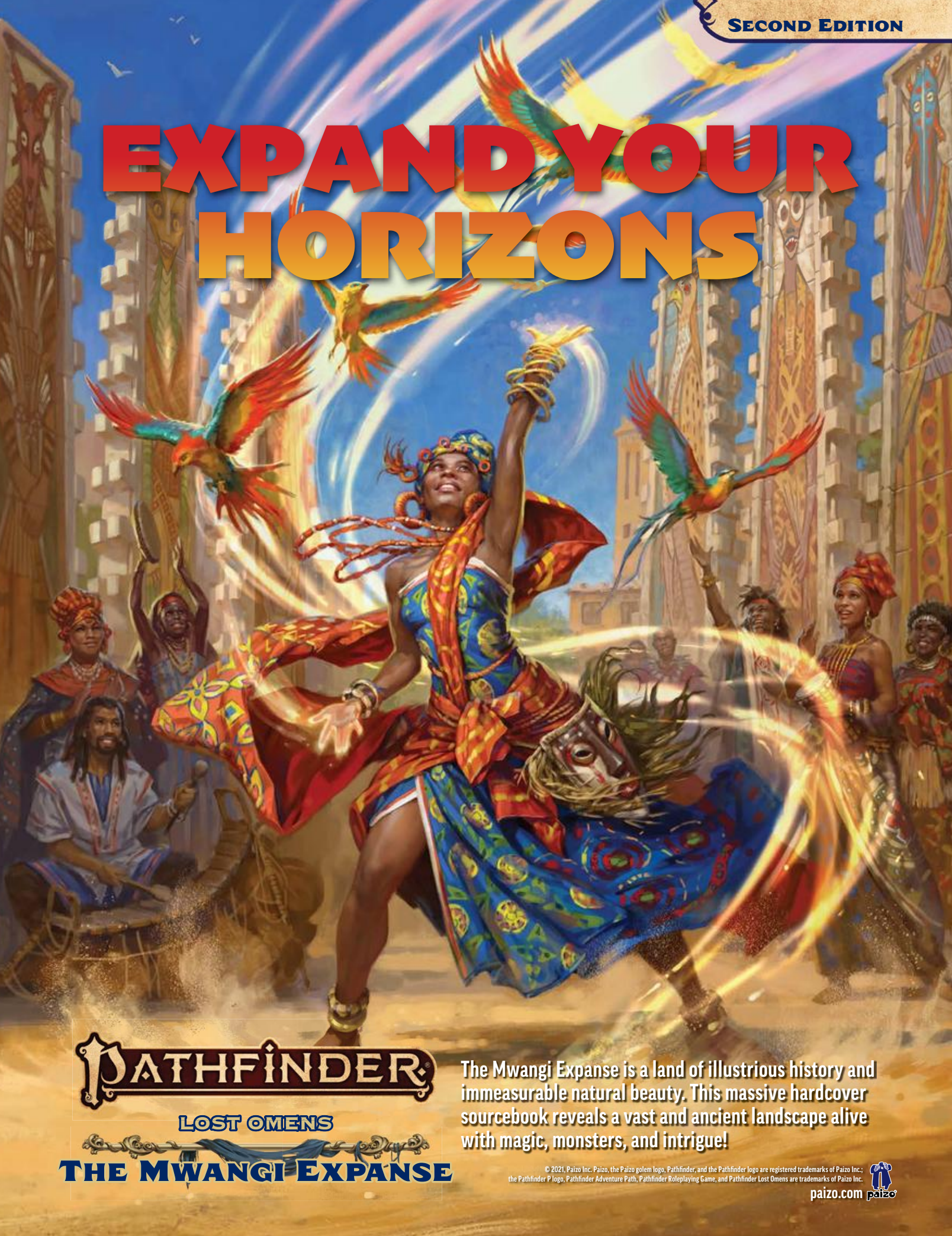
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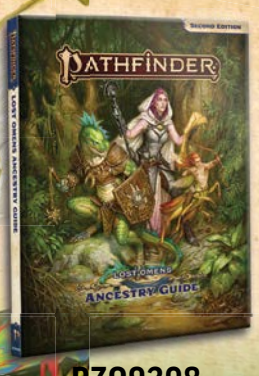

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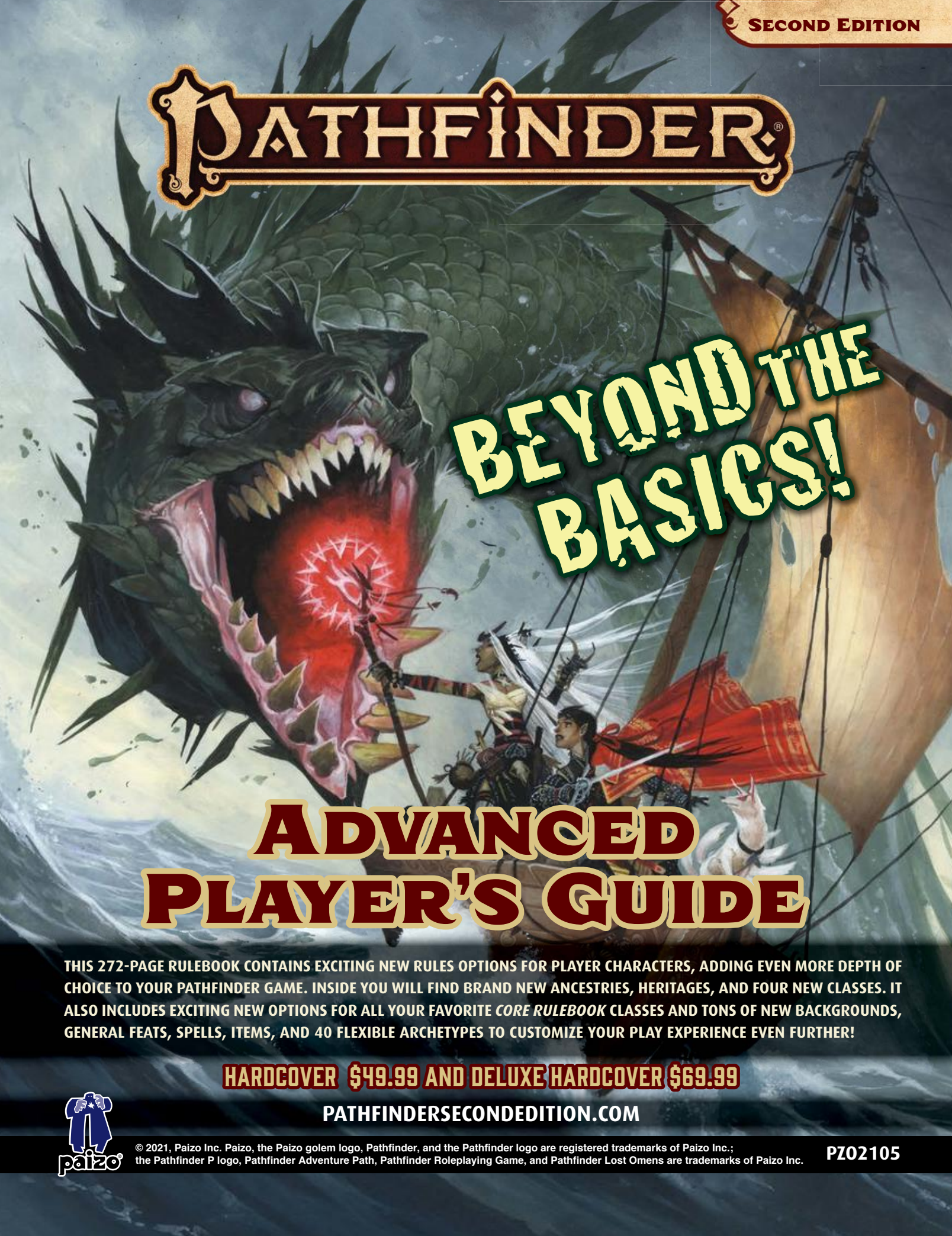

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